THE *London-Ministers Legacy*

To their several

CONGREGATIONS

Being a Collection of

Farewel-Sermons

Preached by

1	Preached by	Mr. *Calamy*,	8	Preached by	Mr. *Baxter*,
2		Mr. *Watson*,	9		Mr. *Jenkins*,
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5		Dr. *Jacomb*,	11		Mr. *Lye*,
6		Mr. *Case*,	13		Dr. *Manton*.
7		Dr. *Jacomb*,			

To which is annexed,

A SERMON Preached at the Funeral of Mr. *Simeon Ash*; late Minister of the Gospel at St. *Austins* in *London*. By *Edmund Calamy*, B. D.

The second Edition; To which is added Mr. Jenkins *Forenoon* SERMON.

2 Sam. 23. 1. *Now these are the last Words of David, the sweet Singer of* Israel.

Printed in the Year 1662.

THE PUBLISHERS TO THE READER.

THe words of dying men usually are very serious, weighty, and much regarded. The ensuing notes being the Preachers last legacies to their several congregations, a little before their civil, though voluntary death; by reason of the great concourse of people that were then assembled in all Churches, to hear their dying Pastors preach

preach their own funeral sermons whilest they were yet alive; many being too distant from them, or too much disturbed by the crowd, fell short of their share and portion in them; others having lost much of what they committed to their memories, addressed themselves to their friends that writ; but it being found too tedious a work to satisfy the desires of all by transcriptions somewhat had taken after them as followeth, by the importunity of many, have been prevailed with for the satisfaction of their friends, to expose their notes to publick view. It is not to be expected (though all care and faithfulness hath been used) that the

the picture ſhould anſwer the perſon in all things; what defects therefore in any kind may be found herein, we humbly pray may not be imputed to the Reverend Authors, but unto the publiſhers hereof. We conceive we need not adde any thing to take off that clamour that is caſt upon them, as if out of an humour, faction, or which is worſe, diſobedience to authority, they refuſed to conform; enough is ſaid by themſelves, to give an account why they choſe to take up their croſſe and follow Chriſt, in a way of conſcience and fidelity.

Reader, we will detain thee no longer from partaking of the fruit we here preſent thee with, but con-

clude

clude, praying that the lives of these worthy Miniſters hearers, may be their legible Epiſtles, ſeen and read of all men; and that their converſations may be ſuch as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt, that whither they (yet again) come and ſee them, or elſe be abſent, they may hear of their affairs; that they ſtand faſt in one ſpirit, ſtriving together for the faith of the Goſpel. Farewell.

SERMON.

SERMON I.

August 17. 1662.

Mr Calamy

2 SAM. 24. 14.

And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of man.

IN which words we have three Parts.

1. *Davids* great perplexity and distress; *I am in a great strait.*

2. *Davids* Resolution.

1. Affirmative, *Let us fall into the hands of the Lord.*

2. Negative, *Let me not fall into the hands of man.*

3. We have the Reason of *Davids* choice, *for the mercies of God are great.* The mercies of wicked men are cruel: *therefore let me not fall into the hands of men*: but the mercies of God are many, and great:

therefore let us now fall into the hands of God.

1. For the first, that is, *Davids* great distress, wherein we must speak,

1. To the distress it self: Then

2. To the person thus perplexed: *I am in a great strait*: *David* a great man, *David* a godly man.

1. In the perplexity it self, we shall consider:

1. The reality of this perplexity.

2. The greatness of it.

1. For the reality of it: after *David* had sinned in numbring the people, God sends the Prophet *Gad* to him, and puts three things to his choice, as you may read in vers. 12. God was determined to make *David* smart for numbring the people, but leaves it to *Davids* liberty, whether he would have seven years famine, or three months to flee before his enemies, or three dayes pestilence: this was a posing Question, and *David* had cause to be in a great strait; for these objects are not amiable in their own nature, they are objects to be avoided and declined; in the first view of them they seem to be equally miserable, therefore *David* had cause to say he was in a strait.

2. This perplexity was not only real, but exceeding great: *I am in a great streat*: and there are two things made this so great.

1. The greatness of the punishments proposed, Famine, Sword, and Plague: these are the three besomes with which God sweeps mankind from off the earth: these are Gods three iron whips, by which

which he chaſtiſeth ſinful man: theſe are the three arrows ſhot out of the quiver of Gods wrath, for the puniſhment of man, they are as one calleth them, *Tonſuræ humani generis*. In *Rev.6.* you ſhall read of four Horſes, when the four firſt Seals were opened: a white horſe, a red horſe, a black horſe, & a pale horſe: after Chriſt had ridden on the white horſe propagating the Goſpel, then follows the red horſe, a type of War, then the black horſe, an Hieroglyphick of Famine: then the pale horſe, the emblem of Peſtilence. Now God was reſolved to ride on one of theſe horſes, and *David* muſt chooſe upon which God ſhould ride; this was a great ſtrait: Let me preſent *Davids* lifting up his eyes to Heaven, and ſpeaking to God thus: O my God, what is this meſſage thou haſt ſent me? thou offereſt me three things: I am in a ſtrait, I know which to refuſe, but which to chooſe I know not: ſhall the Land of *Canaan*, a Land flowing with milk and honey, ſhall this Land endure ſeven years Famine, and be turned into a Wilderneſs, and diſpeopled; and ſhall I, whoſe hands thou haſt taught to fight, and whoſe fingers to war, ſhall I that have ſubdued all my enemies, ſhall I in my old age, and all my Captains, flie three months before our enemies, and be driven to caves and rocks to hide our ſelves? O thou my God, who art my refuge, ſhall I and my people be a prey to the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs and deſtruction, that walketh at noon day? O my God, I know not what to do, *I am in a great ſtrait*.

2. The ſecond reaſon why this ſtrait was ſo great, was, becauſe of the guilt of ſin that lay on *Davids*

ſpirit: for *David* knew that this ſevere meſſage was the fruit of the ſin he committed in numbring the people. But you will ſay, Why, was it a ſin in *David* to number the people: *Moſes* had often numbred the people: three times, and it was not counted ſin. *Joſephus* anſwereth, the ſin of *David* was, becauſe he did not require the half ſhekel, which he was to have had from all were numbred, *Exod.* 30. 12, 13.

Others ſay he ſinned in numbring all ages, whereas he was to number but from twenty years: but theſe are but conjectural Reaſons. I conceive the ſin of *David* was becauſe he did it without a lawful call, and for an unlawful end: *Sine cauſa legittima*: he ſinned in the manner rather then in the matter: for there was no cauſe for him to number the people, but curioſity, and no end but vain glory: *Go through all the tribes of Iſrael and number the people, that I may know the number of my people*, ver. 2. *Davids* heart was lifted up with pride and creature-confidence: he begins to boaſt of the multitude of his people, and to truſt in an arm of fleſh; therefore God ſends the Prophet to *David* to prick the bladder of his pride; as if God ſhould ſay, I will teach you to number the people by leſſening the number of your people: Now the burden of his ſin did add much to the burden of this heavy meſſage: *Ver.* 13. *After David had numbred the people, his heart ſmote him*: the meſſage ſmites him, and his heart ſmites him, and *he ſaid, I have ſinned greatly in that which I have done: now I beſeech thee take away the iniquity of thy ſervant, for I have done very fooliſhly*. If *David* had been to ſuffer this great puniſh-

puniſhment out of love to God, or for a good conſcience, he would not have been ſo diſtreſſed: There are two ſorts of ſtraits in Scripture: ſome ſuffered for God and a good conſcience: and there are ſtraits ſuffered for ſin.

1. There are ſtraits ſuffered for God and a good conſcience. *Heb.* 11. 36, 37. Thoſe Martyrs there were driven to great ſtraits: but theſe were ſtraits for God and a good Conſcience, and theſe ſtraits were the Saints greateſt enlargements, they were ſo ſweetned to them by the conſolations and ſupportations of Gods Spirit; a priſon was a paradiſe to them. *Heb.* 10. 34. they took joyfully at the ſpoiling of their goods. *Acts* 5. 41. they departed from the preſence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his name. Straits for a good conſcience are greateſt enlargements; therefore *Paul* gloryeth in this ſtrait, *Paul a priſoner*, &c.

2. There are ſtraits ſuffered for ſin, and theſe are envenomed by the guilt of ſin: ſin puts poyſon into all our diſtreſſes and perplexities. Now ſuch was the ſtrait into which *David* was now driven: it was a ſtrait cauſed by ſin, and that made it ſo unwelcome and uncomfortable: ſo that from hence I gather this Obſervation.

Doct. *That ſin and iniquity brings perſons and nations into marvellous labyrinths and perplexities: into true, real and great moleſtations: a man free from ſin, is free in the midſt of ſtraits: a man guilty of ſin, is in a ſtrait in the midſt of freedom.*

After *Adam* had ſinned in eating of the forbidden fruit, the whole world was a priſon to him: Paradiſe it ſelf was an hell to him, he knew not where to hide himſelf from the preſence of God. After that *Cain* had murdered his brother *Abel*, he was brought into ſuch a ſtrait, that he was afraid that every one that met him would ſlay him. Alas poor *Cain*, how many was there then in the world? we read but his father and mother, yet ſuch was his diſtreſs, that he crieth out, every one that met him would ſlay him, *Gen.* 4. 14. Into what a ſtrait did ſin bring the old world? the deluge of ſin brought a deluge of water to drown them. Into what a ſtrait did ſin bring *Sodome* and *Gomorrah*? the fire of luſt raining in *Sodome* and *Gomorrah*, brought down fire from heaven to deſtroy them. Sin brings external, internal, and eternal ſtraits upon perſons and nations.

1. Sin brings external ſtraits; ſin brings Famine, Sword, and Plague; ſin brings Agues and Feavours, Gout and Stone, and all manner of Diſeaſes: yea, ſin brings death it ſelf, which is the wages of ſin. Read *Levit.* 26. and *Deut.* 23. and you will ſee a black roul of curſes, which were the fruit of ſin. Sin brought *Sion* into *Babilon*; and when the Jews had murdered Chriſt, forty years after they were brought into that diſtreſs, when the City was beſieged by *Titus Veſpaſian*, that they did eat one another, the mother did eat her child; that whereas *David* had a choice which of the three he would have, either Famine, Plague, or Sword: the poor Jews had all three concatenated

ted together in the ſiedge: ſin brings all manner of external plagues.

2. Sin brought perſons and Nations into internal ſtraits: ſin brings ſoul-plagues, which are worſe than bodily plagues: ſin brings hardneſs of heart, blindneſs of mind, a ſpirit of ſlumber, a reprobate ſence; ſinne brings a ſpiritual famine upon a Land; it brings a famine of the Word, *Amos* 8. 11. ſin cauſes God to take away the Goſpel from a people: ſin brings internal plagues: ſin awakens Conſcience, & fills it full of perplexities: Into what a ſtrait did ſin drive *Judas*, after he had betrayed Chriſt? Into what a ſtrait did ſin drive *Spira?* Saint *Paul* gloried in his tribulations for God: but when he ſpeaks of his ſin, he cryeth out, *O miſerable man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death? David* a valiant man, when he ſpeaks of ſin, ſaith, they are too heavy a burden for him to bear: *A wounded conſcience who can bear!* ſaith the Wiſe man.

3. Sin bringeth eternal ſtraits: O the ſtrait that a wicked man ſhall be brought into at the great and dreadful day of Judgement, when all the world ſhall be on fire about him! when he ſhall call to the mountains to hide him, and to the rocks to cover him from the wrath of God: then will he cry out with *David, I am, O Lord, in a great ſtrait.* And when the Wicked ſhall be condemned to hell, who can expreſs the ſtraits they then ſhall be in? *Bind them hand & foot, and caſt them into everlaſting darkneſs, Matth.*25. When a wicked man ſhall be

bound with everlaſting chains of darkneſs, then he will cry out, *I am in a great ſtrait*. Conſider what *Dives* ſaith to *Abraham*: he deſires that *Lazarus* might but dip the tip of his finger in water, and that he might cool his tongue: not his whole body, but his tongue: but that would not be granted.

It is impoſſible the tongue of man ſhould ſet out the great ſtraits the damned ſuffer in hell, both in regard of the greatneſs and everlaſtingneſs of them.

This is all I ſhall ſay for the Explication.

Uſe 1. I chiefly aim at the Application: Doth ſin bring Nations and Perſons into external, internal, and eternal ſtraits? then this ſadly reproves thoſe that chooſe to commit ſin to avoid perplexity. There are thouſands in *England* guilty of this, that to avoid poverty, will lye, cheat and cozen; and to gain an eſtate, will ſell God and a good conſcience: and to avoid the loſs of eſtate and impriſonment will do any thing: they will be ſure to be of that Religion which is uppermoſt: be it what it will. Now give me leave this morning to ſpeak three things to theſe ſort of men: and O that my words might prevail with them!

1. Conſider it is ſin only that makes trouble to deſerve the name of trouble; for when we ſuffer for Gods ſake, or a good Conſcience, theſe troubles are ſo ſweetned by the conſolations of heaven, that they are no troubles at all: therefore in

Queen

Queen *Maries* dayes the Martyrs wrote to their friends out of priſon, *If you knew the Comforts we have in priſon, you would wiſh to be with us: I am in priſon before I am in priſon,* ſaith Maſter *Sanders.*

Famous is the ſtory of the three Children: they were in a great ſtrait when caſt into the fiery Furnace; Bind them hand and foot, and caſt them into the Furnace; but when they were there, they were unbound: *Dan.* 3. 25. ſaith *Nebuchadezzar, Did not we caſt three men bound into the midſt of the fire? and loe, I ſee four men looſe walking in the midſt of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.* I have often told you, when three are caſt into the fire for a good Conſcience, God will make the fourth: therefore, I ſay, ſtraits and ſufferings for God are not worth the name of ſtraits. *David* was often driven into ſtraits: 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. he was ſore diſtreſſed when his Town was burnt, and his Wives and Children taken captive by the *Amalekites:* I, but that was a diſtreſs of danger, not of ſin: therefore he encourageth himſelf in the Lord his God. *Jehoſaphat* was in a great ſtrait, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *We know not what to do,* ſaith he: this was a ſtrait of danger, not cauſed by his ſin, and God quickly delivered him: but the ſtrait that *David* was in, was cauſed by his ſin, and that made it ſo bitter. I am loth to enlarge here: St. *Paul* was in a great ſtrait, *Phil.* 3. 23. but this was a bleſſed ſtrait, an Evangelical ſtrait, ſaith Saint *Chryſoſtom, He knew not whether to die for his own ſake, or to live for the Churches ſake, were beſt*; he was willing to

adjourn

adjourn his going to Heaven for the good of the people of God: Nay, Chriſt was in a ſtrait, *Luke* 12. 15. I have a Baptiſme to be baptized withall, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed? I am to ſhed my blood for my Elect: that is the Baptiſme he ſpeaks of.

This was a ſtrait of dear affection to the Elect of God: all theſe were bleſſed ſtraits: but now a ſtrait cauſed by ſin, theſe are imbittered and envenomed by the guilt of ſin and ſence of Gods Wrath. It is ſin that maketh ſtraits deſerve the name of ſtraits: therefore you are ſpiritually mad that commit ſin to avoid ſtraits.

2. There is more evil in the leaſt ſin, then in the greateſt outward calamity whatſoever: this the world will not believe: therefore St. *Auſtin* ſaith, *That a man ought not to tell a lie, though he might ſave all the world from hell: for there is more evil in one lie, than there is good in the ſalvation of all the world.* I have often told you the ſtory of Saint *Auſtin*: ſaith he, *If hell were on one ſide, and ſin on the other, and I muſt chooſe one, I would chooſe hell rather then ſin: for God is the Author of hell, but it is blaſphemy to ſay he is the Author of ſin.* There is a famous ſtory of *Charles* the ninth King of *France*, he ſent a meſſage to the Prince of *Condy*, a zealous Proteſtant, gives him three things to chooſe, either to go to Maſs, or to be put to death, or to ſuffer baniſhment all his life long: ſaith he, *Primum Deo juvante nunquam eligo: The firſt (God helping) I will never chooſe, I abhor the idolatry of the Maſs: but for the two other, I leave it to the choice of the King to do as he pleaſes:*

ſes: there is more evil in the leaſt ſin then the greateſt miſery.

3. The third thing I would have you conſider, that whoſoever goeth out of Gods way to avoid danger, ſhall certainly meet with greater danger. *Balaam* went out of Gods way, *Numb.* 22. 22. and God ſent an Angel with a drawn ſword, and he riding upon an Aſſe, *verſ.* 26. the Angel ſtood in a narrow place, where was no way to go from the right hand or from the left: if his Aſs had not fallen under him, he had been run through by the ſword of the Angel. *Jonah* for fear of the King of *Nineveh* went out of Gods way, but he met with a mighty tempeſt, he met with a Whale: What do you do when you commit ſin? you make way to be caſt into the eternal priſon of hell: you deſtroy your precious ſouls to ſave your periſhing bodies.

Uſe 2. If ſin be the father and mother of all perplexity and diſtreſſes, then, I beſeech you, let us above all things in the world abhor ſin: all the curſes of the Bible are all due only to a ſinner; and all the curſes not named in the Bible: for that is obſervable, *Deut.* 28. 36. every plague that is not written in the book ſhall light upon him: there are ſtrange puniſhments to the workers of iniquity, *Job* 31. 3. Is not deſtruction to the wicked a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity; ſin it bringeth the ſinner to little eaſe; little eaſe at death, little eaſe at the day of judgement, and little eaſe in hell, tribulation and anguiſh: the word in the

the Greek is ἀπαλλοτριώσεις little eaſe to every ſoul that doth iniquity. Oh my beloved, will you promiſe me to look upon ſin, and conſider it in all its woful conſequents, as the father, mother, and womb out of which come external, eternal, and internal ſtraits? more particularly there are twelve ſins I eſpecially command you to take heed of and avoid.

1. Take heed of covetouſneſs: the love of the world will peirce you through with many ſorrows; the love of money is the root of all evil; the love of the world drowns men in perdition.

2. Take heed of the ſin of pride: into what woful ſtrait did pride bring *Haman*! God croſſed him in what he moſt deſired: God made him hold the ſtirrup, while *Mordecay* rode in triumph; and God hanged him on the Gallows which he had made for *Mordecay*.

3. Take heed of drunkenneſs; look not on the wine when it gives its colour in the cup, &c. drunkenneſs will bring you into ſnares, it will bite like a Serpent, and ſting like an Adder, &c.

4. Take heed of diſobedience and rebellion againſt the Commandments of God: it brought *Jonah* to the three nights and three dayes in the Whales belly.

5. Take heed of fornication, and adultery, and all

all uncleanneſs; this brought *Sampſon* to a woful ſtrait: this brought *David* and *Solomon* into great perplexity.

6. Take heed of oppreſſion, and all acts of injuſtice: this brought *Ahab* into great ſtrait, inſomuch that the dogs licked his blood.

7. Take heed of unneceſſary familiarity with wicked men: this brought *Jehoſaphat* into a great ſtrait.

8. Take heed of miſuſing the Prophets of God: this made God deſtroy the Children of *Iſrael* without remedy, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16.

9. Take heed of coming prophanely to the Lords Table: this brought the Church of *Corinth* into a great diſtreſs, inſomuch as the Apoſtle ſaith, *For this cauſe many among you are ſick, and many weak, and many fallen aſleep.*

10. Take heed of loathing the Manna of your ſouls: this brought the people of Iſrael into woful miſery, that God deſtroyed all their carcaſſes in the wilderneſs, ſave *Joſhua* and *Caleb.*

Take heed of ſlighting the Goſpel: this brought Queen *Maries* perſecution, as many learned and godly men that fled for Religions ſake out of the Land, have confeſſed their unthankfulneſs for, and unfruitfulneſs under the Goſpel in King *Edward* the ſixths time, brought the perſecution in Queen *Maries* time.

11. Take

11. Take heed of loſing your firſt Love: that makes God threaten to take away his Candleſtick.

12. Take heed of prophaning the Chriſtian Sabbath, which is much prophaned every where, a day that Chriſt by his reſurrection from the dead hath conſecrated, to be kept holy to God: Certainly if the Jews were ſo ſeverely puniſhed for breaking the Sabbath, which was ſet apart in memory of the Creation, ſurely God will ſeverely puniſh thoſe that break the Sabbath ſet apart in memory of Chriſts Reſurrection. May be ſome will ſay, I have committed many of theſe ſins, but am not brought into any ſtrait. Remember it was nine months after *David* had numbred the people, before he was in this ſtrait: but as ſure as God is in heaven, ſin will bring ſtraits ſooner or later; though a ſinner a hundred years, yet ſhall he be accurſed: may be thy proſperity makes way for thy damnation: and this is thy greateſt diſtreſs, that thou goeſt on in ſin and proſperity.

Uſe 3. If ſin bringeth a Nation into marvellous labyrinths, learn what great cauſe we have to fear that God ſhould bring this Nation into great diſtreſs, becauſe of the great abominations are committed in the midſt of it: our King and Soveraign was in great ſtrait in the dayes of his baniſhment, but God hath delivered him: God hath delivered this Nation out of great ſtraits; but alas we requite God evil for good, and inſtead of repenting

repenting of old ſins we commit new ſins. I am told there are new oaths invented, oaths not fit to be named in any place, much leſs here: Certainly the drunkenneſs and adultery, the oppreſſion and injuſtice, the bribery and Sabbath-breaking, the vain and wicked ſwearing and for-ſwearing this Nation is guilty of, muſt of neceſſity provoke God to ſay of us as he did of them in *Jeremiah* 15. 29. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord*? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this? God will not only puniſh us, but be avenged on us. There is no way to avoid a national deſolation but by a national reformation.

Laſtly, learn what cauſe you of this Congregation and Pariſh, what cauſe you have to expect that God ſhould bring you into great ſtraits, becauſe of your great unthankfulneſs and unfruitfulneſs under the means of Grace, you that have ſo long enjoyed the Goſpel; you have had the Goſpel in this place in great abundance; Doctor *Taylor* he ſerved an appertenticeſhip in this place: Doctor *Straughton* ſerved another apprenticeſhip, and I, through divine Mercy, have ſerved three apprenticeſhips, and half another almoſt, among you; you have had the Spirit of God ſeven and thirty years in the faithful miniſtry of the Word knocking at the door of your hearts, but many of you have hardened your hearts. Are there not ſome of you, I only put the queſtion, that begin to loath the Manna of your ſouls, and to look back towards *Egypt* again? Are there not ſome of you have itching ears, and would fain have Preachers

that

that would feed you with dainty phraſes, and begin not to care for a Miniſter that unrips your Conſciences, ſpeaks to your hearts and ſouls, and would force you into heaven by frighting you out of your ſins? Are there not ſome of you, that by often hearing Sermons are become Sermon proof, that know to ſleep and ſcoffe away Sermons? I would be glad to ſay there are but few ſuch; but the Lord knoweth there are too too many that by long preaching get little good by preaching, inſomuch that I have often ſaid it, and ſay it now again, there is hardly any way to raiſe the price of the Goſpel-Miniſtry, but by the want of it: And that I may not flatter you, you have not profited under the means you have enjoyed; therefore you may juſtly expect God may bring you into a ſtrait, and take away the Goſpel from you: God may juſtly take away your Miniſters by death or other wayes. Have you not loſt yovr firſt Love? why did God take away the Goſpel from the Church of *Epheſus*, but becauſe they loſt their firſt Love? Are you not like the Church of *Laodecea*, that are neither hot nor cold? therefore God may juſtly ſpew you out of his mouth: what God will do with you, I know not; a few weeks will determine: God can make a great change in a little time: we leave all to God: but in the mean time let me commend one Text of Scripture to you, *Jerem.* 13. 16. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains, and while you look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs:* Verſe 17. *But if you will not hear it, my*

ſoul

ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride, and mine eyes ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe the Lords flock is carried away captive. Give glory to God by confeſſing and repenting of your ſins, by humbling your ſouls before the Lord, before darkneſs come, and who knoweth but this may prevent darkneſs?

The end of the firſt Sermon.

SERMON II.

2 Cor. 7. 1. Mr Watson

Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves.

IT is the Title that I intend now, by the help of God, to inſiſt upon, that ſweet Parentheſis in the Text, *Dearly beloved*, wherein you have the Apoſtle breathing forth his affections unto this people: he ſpeaks now as a Paſtor, & he ſpeaks to them of his ſpiritual Children.

Dearly beloved, where you have,

Firſt, The title, *Beloved.*

Secondly, The exhortation to holineſs, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves.*

Thirdly, The means how we ſhould be cleanſed and ſanctified, *Having theſe promiſes.*

It is the first of these that I intend: the title that the Apostle gives to his children, *Dearly beloved.*

From hence observe this Doctrine.

That the affections of a right Gospel-Minister towards his people are very ardent.

Dearly beloved, there are two things in every Minister of Christ that are much exercised: his head and his heart, his head with labour, and his heart with love: his head with labour in the work of the Ministry: if done aright, it is a work fitter for Angels then for men: it is our work to open the Oracles of God, even those sacred profound things that the Angels search into: and if God did not help us, we might soon sink under the weight of such a burden: and as a Ministers head is exercised with labour, so his heart is exercised with love, & it is hard to say which of the two exceeds: his labour or his love. Thus is it here in the Text, *my dearly beloved*: in these words we have Saint *Paul* laying siege to these *Corinthians*, and labouring to make a happy victory, to conquer them with kindness, *dearly beloved.* Saint *Pauls* heart was the spring of love, his lips were the pipe, the *Corinthians* were the cistern into which this spring did run. This holy Apostle was a mirror and pattern of love, towards the sinning *Corinthians*: *Pauls* tears did drop towards the praying *Corinthians*, his love did burn:

holy

holy *Paul* was a *Seraphin*, his heart did burn in a flame of affection to his people: how many paſſages do we find ſcattered in his Epiſtles? he tells his people, which ſometimes he did write to, and ſometimes he preached to, he looked after their ſouls more then their ſilver, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. *We ſeek not yours but you*: as a tender nurſe cheriſheth her childe with the breaſt, ſo Saint *Paul* gave his people the breaſt-milk of the Word, in 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 8. this man of God did not only beſtow a Sermon upon his people, but was willing to impart his very ſoul to them if it might ſave theirs, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 7. *We were willing to have imparted to you our own ſouls, becauſe you are dear unto us*: Such was Saint *Pauls* affection to his people, that without a complement he loved them more then his life, *Phil.* 2. 17. and *if I be offered upon the ſacrifice & ſervice of your faith, I rejoyce with you all*: that is as if he had ſaid, If it be ſo that my blood be poured forth as a ſacrifice, if my death may be any way ſerviceable unto you, if it may help forward the ſtrengthning and confirming of your faith, I am willing to die, I rejoyce to do it: ſo full of affections was this Apoſtle, that he could not chooſe but love his people, though the more he did love, the leſſe he ſhould be loved: In 2 *Corinth.* 12. 15. oh how did *Paul* ſweeten all his Sermons with love, in 2 *Corinth.* 12. if he reproved ſin, yet he was angry in love; he dipt the pill in ſugar, *Galat.* 4. 9, 10, 11. *How turn you again to weak and beggarly elements! you obſerve dayes, and months, and years; I am afraid of you, leſt I have beſtowed upon you labour in vain;*

Brethren, I beſeech you, be as I am. See how Saint *Paul* chides their ſins, and yet at the ſame time courts their ſouls: no ſooner did he lanch the wound, but preſently he poured in wine and oyl into it: ſo did *Paul* love his people, that he would not juſtly give any offence to the weakeſt believer. 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. *If meat make my brother to offend, I will never eat fleſh more whilſt the world ſtandeth.* *Paul* was like ſome tender mother, who forbears to eat thoſe meats that ſhe might, for fear of hurting the child that ſhe gives ſuck to. Thus you ſee he was a ſpiritual father made up of love: and ſurely, my brethren, this affection in ſome degree is in all the true Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, they are full of ſympathy and bowels unto thoſe over whom the holy Ghoſt hath made them Overſeers.

I ſhall only glance at the Reaſons why it will be thus, and why it ſhould be thus, that ſuch flaming affections there ſhould be in all Chriſts Miniſters to their people.

It will be thus for theſe two Reaſons briefly.

Firſt, from that principle within that teacheth Love. Grace doth not fire the heart with paſſion, but with compaſſion. Grace in the heart of a Miniſter files off that ruggedneſs that is in his ſpirit, making him loving and courteous. *Paul* once breathed out perſecution: but when Grace came, this bramble was turned into a ſpiritual Vine, twiſting himſelf about the ſouls of his people with loving embraces.

Secondly, there will be this ardent love in a miniſters heart, from that ſpiritual relation that is be-

betwixt him and his people: he is a ſpiritual Father: and ſhall we think him to be without bowels! 1 *Cor.*4.15. *Though you have ten thouſand inſtructers, yet have you not many fathers: for in Chriſt Jeſus I have begotten you through the Goſpel.* Some he begets unto Chriſts, others he build up in Chriſt. Doth not a father provide chearfully for his children? can a father ſee bread taken from his childe and not have his heart affected with it? is it not a grief to a parent to ſee his child put out to a drie Nurſe?

Secondly, there ſhould be this ardent love and affection in all Gods Miniſters for this reaſon, becauſe this is the livelieſt way to do moſt good: knotty and ſtubborn hearts will ſooneſt be wrought upon with kindneſs. The fire melteth the hardeſt metal; the fire of love with Gods bleſſing will melt the moſt obdurate ſinner. A *Boanarges*, a ſon of conſolation, who comes in the ſpirit of love and meekneſs, is the fitteſt to do a piece of Goſpel-chirurgery, to reſtore and put ſuch an one in joynt again that is overtaken with a fault. *Gal.*6.1. *Reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of love and meekneſs.* Thus much in ſhort for the doctrinal part.

Give me leave now to make ſome application.

And firſt, here are ſeveral Inferences that may be drawn from this: As

Firſt, ſee here the right character of a Goſpel-Miniſter: He is full of love, he exhorts, he comforts, he reproves, and all in love; he is never angry with his people, but becauſe they will not be

ſaved? How loth is a Miniſter of Chriſt to ſee precious ſouls, like ſo many jewels, caſt over-board into the dead Sea of hell? A conſcientious Miniſter would count it an unhappy gain, to gain the world and loſe the ſouls of his people: he ſaith, as the King of *Sodome* to *Abraham*, *Give me the perſons, and take thee the goods*, Gen. 14. 21.

The ſecond branch of Information is this; Are true Goſpel-Miniſters ſo full of love? then how ſad is it to have ſuch Miniſters put upon a people as have no love to ſouls? The work of the miniſtry, it is a labour of love: Oh how ſad is it to have ſuch in the miniſtry, that can neither labour nor love? that are ſuch as are without bowels, that look more at tyths then at ſouls? It muſt needs be ſad with a people in any part of the world to have ſuch miniſters ſet over them, as either poyſon them with error, or do what in them lies to damn them by their wicked example: How can the Devil reprove ſin? how can the Miniſter cry out in the Pulpit againſt drunkenneſs, that will himſelf be drunk? *Rom.* 2. 22. *Thou that teacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal? Thou that ſayeſt a man ought not to commit adultery, doeſt thou commit adultery?* We read that the ſnuffers of the Tabernacle were to be made of pure gold, *Exod.* 37. 23. thoſe who by their calling are to reprove and ſnuffe off the ſins of others, they ſhould be pure gold, holy perſons. In the Law God did appoint the lip of the Leper ſhould be covered; he ought to have his lip covered, he ſhould not be permitted to ſpeak the Oracles of God, who though he be by office an Angel, yet by life is a Leper.

Thirdly, ſee from hence the happineſs of a Miniſter who is placed among ſuch a people as give him abundant cauſe of love: How happy is he that can ſay to his people from his heart, *Ἀγαπητοί my dearly beloved!* And here let me ſpeak by way of encouragement to you of this Pariſh; I find St. *Paul* commending the good he ſaw in his people, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 3. *We are bound to thank God alwayes for you beloved, becauſe your faith grows exceedingly.* Here *Paul* is commending his people in imitation of this Apoſtle, let me at this time ſpeak a commendatory word to you; I have exerciſed my Miniſtry now among you for almoſt ſixteen years, and I rejoyce and bleſs God that I cannot ſay, The more I love you, the leſſe I am loved; I have received many ſignal demonſtrations of love from you: though other Pariſhes have exceeded you for number of houſes, yet I think not for ſtrength of affection. I have with much comfort obſerved your reverent attention to the Word preached; you rejoyced in this light not for a ſeaſon, but to this day: I have obſerved your zeal againſt error, and as much as could be expected in a critical time, your unity and amity: this is your honour, and if for the future there ſhould be any interruption made in my Miniſtry among you, though I ſhould not be permitted to preach to you, yet I ſhall not ceaſe to love you, and to pray for you: but why ſhould there be an interruption made? where is the crime? Some indeed ſay, that we are diſloyal and ſeditious? Beloved, what my actings and ſufferings for his Majeſty have been, is known not to a few of you: but however we muſt go to Heaven through good

report,

report and thorough bad report: and it is well if we can get to glory, though we paſs through the pikes. I ſhall endeavour that I may ſtill approve the ſincerity of my love to you: I will not promiſe that I ſhall ſtill preach among you, nor will I ſay that I ſhall not; I deſire to be guided by the ſilver thread of Gods Word, and of Gods Providence: my heart is toward you: there is, you know, an expreſſion in the late Act, that we ſhall be now ſhortly as if we were naturally dead; and if I muſt die, let me leave ſome legacy with you before I go from you: I cannot but give you ſome counſel and advice for your ſouls, and I hope there is no hurt in that: There are, my beloved, theſe twenty directions, that I deſire you to take ſpecial notice of, which I would leave as advice and counſel with you about your ſouls.

Firſt, I beſeech you, keep your conſtant hours every day with God; the godly man is a man ſet apart, *Pſal.* 4. 3. not only becauſe God hath ſet him apart by election, but becauſe he hath ſet himſelf apart by devotion. Give God the *Aurora filium*, begin the day with God, viſit God in the morning before you make any other viſits: wind up your hearts towards heaven in the morning, and they will go the better all the day after. O turn your Cloſets into Temples: read the Scriptures: the two Teſtaments are the two lips by which God ſpeaks to us; theſe will make you wiſe unto ſalvation: the Scripture is both a glaſs to ſhew you your ſpots, and a laver to waſh them away: beſiege heaven every day with prayer: thus perfume your houſes, and keep a conſtant intercourſe with heaven.

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Secondly, get good books into your houſes: when you haye not the ſpring near to you, then get water into your ciſtern; ſo when you have not that wholſome preaching that you deſire, good books are ciſterns that hold the waters of life, in them to refreſh you. When *Davids* natural heat was taken away, they covered him with warm clothes, 1 *Kings* 1. ſo when you find a chilneſs upon your ſouls, and that your former heat begins to abate, ply your ſelves with warm clothes; get thoſe good books that may acquaint you with ſuch truths as may warm and affect your hearts.

Thirdly, have a care of your company: take heed of unneceſſary familiarity with ſinners: we cannot catch health from another, but we may ſoon catch a diſeaſe: the diſeaſe of ſin is very catching: I would be as fraid of coming among the wicked, as among thoſe that have the plague, *Pſal.* 106.35. *They were mingled with the heathen & learned their works*: if we cannot make others better, let us have a care that they make not us worſe. *Lot* was a miracle, he kept freſh in *Sodomes* ſalt-water. My beloved, take heed of the occaſions of ſin: evil company is an occaſion of ſin. The *Nazarites* in the old Law, as they might drink no wine, ſo they were forbidden grapes, whereof the wine was made, as you read in *Numb.* 6. to teach us, that all occaſions of ſin muſt be avoided: evil company is, *hellus animarum*, the Devils draw-net, by which he draws millions to Hell: How many families and how many ſouls have been ruined and undone in this City by evil company? many there are that go from a Play-houſe to a Whore-houſe, and from a Tavern to Tyburn.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, have a care whom ye hear; it is our Saviour Christs counsel, *Mat.* 7. 15. *Beware of false Prophets, that come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.* Let me tell you, the Devil hath his Ministers as well as Christ: *Rev.* 12. 15. *The Serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman:* that is, as the learned expound it, Satan by his Ministers and Emissaries cast out the flood of *Arrian* doctrine to drown the Church. There are some, who by the subtilty of their wit have learned the Art to mix error with truth, and to give poyson in a golden cup. Take heed who you hear, and how you hear; be like those noble *Bereans*, that searched the Scriptures whether the things that they preached were so or not, *Acts* 17. 11. Your ears must not be like spunges that suck in puddle-water as well as wine; but your ears must be like a fan, that fans out the chaffe, but retains the pure wheat: you must be like those in the Parable, *Matth.* 13. 48. that gathered the good fish into vessels, but cast the bad away. The Saints are called Virgins for their wisdom: they will not let every one defile their souls with error; they have a judicious ear, and a critical palate, that can distinguish betwixt truth and error, and put a difference betwixt meat of Gods sending, and the Devils cooking.

Fiftly, study sincerity, *Psal.* 51. 6. *Behold thou desirest truth in the inward part:* be what you seem to be: be not like Rowers in a Barge, that look one way and row another: Do not look heaven-ward by your profession, and row hell-ward by your conversation: do not pretend to love God, and yet

love

love ſin: *Simulata ſanctitas, duplicata iniquitas:* Counterfeit piety is double iniquity. Let your hearts be upright with God: the plainer the Diamond is, the richer it is; and the more plain the heart is, the more doth God value this jewel. A little ruſty gold is far better then a great deal of bright braſs: a little true Grace, though ruſted over with many infirmities, is better then all the gliſtering ſhews of hypocrites: a ſincere heart is Gods currant coin, and he will give it grains of allowance.

Sixthly, as you love your ſouls, be not ſtrangers to your ſelves; be much and often in the work of ſelf-examination; among all the books that you read, turn over the book of your own heart; look into the book of conſcience, ſee what is written there: *Pſal.77.6. I commune with mine own heart:* Set up a judgement ſeat in your own ſouls; examine whether you have grace or not: prove whether you are in the faith: be as much afraid of a painted holineſs as you would be afraid of going to a painted heaven: Do not think your ſelves good, becauſe others think ſo: let the Word be the touch-ſtone, by which you try your hearts: let the Word be the looking-glaſs, by which you judge of the complexion of your ſouls: for want of this ſelf-ſearching many live known to others, and die unknown to themſelves.

Seventhly, keep your ſpiritual watch, *Mat.*13.37. what I ſay unto you I ſay unto all, watch: if it were the laſt word I ſhould ſpeak, it ſhould be this word, watch. O what need hath a Chriſtian to be ever upon his watch! the heart is a ſubtle piece, and will

be

be ſtealing out to vanity, and if we are not careful it will decoy us into ſin: we have a ſpecial eye upon ſuch perſons as we ſuſpect: thy heart is a ſuſpicious perſon: O have an eye upon it, watch it continually: it is a boſom traytor. *Job* ſet a watch before his eyes, *Job* 31. 1. We muſt every day keep ſentinel: ſleep not upon your guard: our ſleeping time is the Devils tempting time: let not not your watch candle go out.

Eightly, you that are the people of God, do you often oſſociate together, *Mal.* 3. 16. they that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another, Chriſts Doves ſhould flock together: one Chriſtian will help to heat another: a ſingle coal of Juniper will ſoon die, but many coals put together, will keep life one in another. Conference ſometimes may do as much good as preaching: one Chriſtian by good diſcourſe drops holy oyl upon another, that makes the lamp of his grace to ſhine the brighter. It is great wiſdom to keep up the trade in a Corporation. Chriſtians by meeting often together, ſetting good diſcourſe on foot, keep up the trade of godlineſs, that elſe would decay & ſoon be loſt. Is not the communion of Saints an Article in our Creed? Do not then live ſo aſunder, as if this Article were blotted out. The Naturaliſts obſerve there is a ſympathy in Plants; they ſay ſome Plants bear better when they grow near other plants, as the Vine and the Elme, the Olive and the Myrtle thrive beſt when they grow together: it is true in Religion, the Saints are trees of righteouſneſs, that thrive beſt in godlineſs when they grow together.

Ninthly, get your hearts ſcrewed up above the world;

world; ſet your affections upon things above, *Col.* 3.3. We may ſee the face of the Moon in the water, but the Moon is fixed above in the Firmament: ſo though a Chriſtian walks here below, yet his heart ſhould be fixed above in Heaven: in Heaven there is our beſt kindred, our pureſt joy, our Manſion-houſe; O let our hearts be above: it is the beſt and the ſweeteſt kind of life: the higher the bird flies, the ſweeter it ſings: and the higher the heart is raiſed above the world, the ſweeter joy it hath. The Eagle that flies in the air, is not ſtung by the Serpent: thoſe whoſe hearts are elevated above the lower Region of this world, are not ſtung with the vexations and diſquietments that others are, but are full of joy and contentment.

10. Trade much in the promiſes: the promiſes are great ſupports to faith; faith lives in a promiſe as the fiſh lives in the water: the promiſes are both comforting and quickening: they are *mitralia evangelii*, the very breaſts of the Goſpel: as the child by ſucking the breaſts gets ſtrength; ſo faith by ſucking the breaſt of a promiſe gets ſtrength and revives. The promiſes of God are bladders to keep us from ſinking when we come into the waters of affliction: the promiſes are ſweet cluſters of grapes that grow upon Chriſt the true Vine. O trade much in the promiſes: there is no condition that you can be in, but you have a promiſe: the promiſes are like Manna, that ſute themſelves to every Chriſtians palate.

11. To all you that hear me, live in a calling. *Jerome* gave his friend this advice to be ever well employed, that when the Devil came to tempt him,

him, he might find him working in his vineyard, Sure I am, the ſame God that ſaith, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy*, ſaith alſo, *Six days ſhalt thou labour*. The great God never ſealed any warrants to idleneſs: an idle profeſſour is the ſhame of his profeſſion, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 11. *I hear there are ſome*, ſayes the Apoſtle, *that work not at all, but are buſibodies: ſuch we exhort, by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work*. *Solon* made Laws to puniſh idleneſs; and *Cicero* ſaith of an idle man, *Spiritum trahit, non vivit*, he draws his breath, but doth not live, he is not uſeful: but a good Chriſtian acts within the ſphere of his own calling.

12. Let me intreat you to joyn the firſt and the ſecond Table together: piety to God, and equity to your Neighbour: the Apoſtle puts theſe two words together in one verſe, δικαίως καὶ ὁσίως *Titus* 2. 12. *That we ſhould live righteouſly and godly*: righteouſly, that relates to mortality; godly, that relates to piety and ſanctity: alwayes remember this, every Command hath the ſame Divine ſtamp and authority as another Command hath. I would try a moral man by the duties of the firſt Table, & I would try a profeſſor by the duties of the ſecond Table: Some pretend faith, but have no works; others have works, but they have no faith: Some pretend zeal for God, but are not juſt in their dealings; others are juſt in their dealings, but have not one ſpark of zeal for God. If you would go to heaven, you muſt turn both ſides to the Table, the firſt and ſecond Table, joyn piety & mortality together: as we blame the Papiſts for blotting out the ſecond Commandment, let not the Papiſts blame us for leaving out the ſecond Table. Thir-

13. Joyn the Serpent and the Dove together, innocency and prudence, *Mat.* 10. 16. *Be wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.* We must have innocency with our wisdom, else our wisdom is but craftiness; and we must have wisdom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weakness: We must have the harmlessness of the Dove, that we may not wrong others; and we must have the prudence of the Serpent, that others may not abuse and circumvent us; not to wrong the truth by silence, here is the innocency of the Dove; not to betray our selves by rashness, here's the wisdom of the Serpent: how happy is it where these two are united, the Dove & the Serpent! the *Dove* without the *Serpent* is folly, and the *Serpent* with the *Dove* is impiety.

14. Be more afraid of sin then of suffering: A man may be afflicted, and yet have the love of God; but he cannot sin, but presently God is angry; sin eclipses the light of Gods countenance; in suffering the Conscience may be quiet. When the hail beats upon the tiles, there may be musick in the house; and when there is suffering in the body, there may be peace and musick in the conscience; but when a man sins wilfully and presumptuously, he loseth all his peace. *Spira* abjured his faith, and he became a terrour to himself, he could not endure himself; he professed he thought *Cain* and *Judas* in hell did not feel those terrors and horrors that he felt. He that will commit sin to prevent suffering, is like a man that lets his head be wounded, to save his shield and his helmet.

15. Take heed of Idolatry: In 1 *Joh.* 5. 21. *Little children, keep your selves from Idols.* Idolatry is an Image of *jealousie* to provoke God, it breaks the ma-

riage-knot asunder,& makes the Lord disclaim his interest in a people;what kind of Religion is Popery? it is the mother of many monsters. What Soul-damning doctrins do it hold forth,as the meriting of salvation by good works,the giving of pardons, the worshipping of Angels, Popish indulgencies, Purgatory,and the like?it is a Soul-damning Religion, it is the breeder of ignorance, uncleanness & murder, the Popish Religion is not defended by strength of Argument,but by force of Arms; keep your selves from Idols, and take heed of Superstition, that is the Gentleman-usher to Popery.

16. Think not the worse of Godliness because it is reproached and persecuted; wicked men being stirred up by the Devil, do maliciously reproach the wayes of God; such were *Julian* and *Lucian*: though wicked men would be godly on their death beds, yet in the time of their life they revile and hate godliness;but think not you the worse of Religion because it is reproached by the wicked.Suppose a Virgin should be reproached for her chastity,yet chastity is never the worse: if a blind man jeer the Sun, the Sun is never the less bright. Holiness is a beautiful and glorious thing; it is the Angels glory, and shall we be ashamed of that which makes us like the Angels? There is a time coming when wicked men would be glad of some of that holiness that now they despise, but they shall be as far then from obtaining it, as they are now from desiring it.

17. Think not the better of sin because it is in fashion; think not the better of impiety and ungodliness because most walk in those crooked ways. Multitude is a foolish argument: Multitude doth not

not argue the goodneſs of a thing; the Devils name is Legion, that ſignifieth a multitude. Hell-road is this day full of Travellers; eſteem not the better of ſin becauſe moſt go this way; do we think the better of the Plague becauſe it is common? The plea of a Multitude will not hold at Gods bar; when God ſhall ask you, why did you prophane my Sabbath, why were you drunk, why did you break your Oaths? to ſay then, Lord, Becauſe moſt men did ſo, will be but a poor plea; God will ſay to you, Then ſeeing you have ſinned with the multitude, you ſhall now go to Hell with the multitude. I beſeech you as you tender your ſouls, walk Antipodes to the corruptions of the Times; if you are living Fiſh, ſwim againſt the ſtream; dead fiſh ſwim down the ſtream. *Epheſ.* 5. 11. *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them.*

18. In the buſineſs of Religion ſerve God with all your might, *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work or device in the grave whither thou goeſt.* This is an Argument why we ſhould do all we can for God, ſerve him with all our ſtrength, becauſe the grave is very near, and there is no praying, no repenting in the grave; our time is but ſmall, and therefore our zeal for God ſhould be great. *David* danced with all his might before the Ark, and ſo ſhould we act vigorouſly for God in the ſphere of Obedience, *Rom.* 12. 12. *fervent in ſpirit ſerving the Lord.* Take heed of a dull lazy temper in Gods ſervice; you muſt not only ſay a Prayer, or read a Prayer, but you muſt pour out your ſoul in Prayer; not only love God, but be ſick of love to God. God

in the old Law would have the Coals put to the Incenſe, *Levit.* 16. 13. and why ſo? to typifie that the Heart muſt be inflamed in the worſhip of God, your Prayers muſt go up with a flame of Devotion. I confeſs Hell will be taken without a ſtorm, you may jump into Hell with eaſe; but it is all up hill to Heaven, and therefore you muſt put forth all your might. *Mat.* 12. 11. *The violent take heaven by force.* Heaven is not taken but by ſtorm: do you not ſee men zealous and very active for the Devil, and for their Luſts? and ſhall they take pains for Hell, and will not you take pains for Heaven?

19. Do all the good you can while you live to others. God hath made every Creature uſefull for us; the Sunne hath not its light for it ſelf, but for us; the Fountain runs freely, and ſo does the myrrhe drop from the Tree; every Creature doth as it were deny it ſelf for us, the Beaſt gives us its labour, the bird gives us its muſick, and the Silk-worm its ſilke: Now hath God made every thing uſeful for us, and ſhall not we be be uſeful one for the good of another? O labour to be helpful to the Souls of others, and to ſupply the wants of others: Jeſus Chriſt was a publick Bleſſing in the World, he went about doing good; we are all Members of the Body politick, nay, are we not Members of the Body myſtical, and ſhall not every Member be helpful for the good of the Body? that is a dead Member that doth not communicate to the good of the Body. O labour to be uſeful to others while you live, that ſo when you die, there may be a miſs of you; many live ſo unfruitfully, that truly their Life is ſcarce worth a prayer,

er, nor their Death ſcarce worth a tear.

20. Every day ſpend ſome thoughts upon Eternity. O Eternity, Eternity! all of us here are ere long, it may be ſome of us within a few dayes or hours, to lanch forth into the Ocean of Eternity. Eternity is *ſtatus interminabilis*, ſayes *Boetius*; no Proſpective-glaſs can ſee to the end of Eternity. Eternity is a ſumme that can never be numbered, a Line that can never be meaſured; Eternity is a Condition of everlaſting miſery or everlaſting happineſs; if you are godly, then ſhall you be for ever happy, you ſhall be always ſunning your ſelves in the light of Gods countenance; if you are wicked, you ſhall be always miſerable, ever lying in the ſcalding Furnace of the wrath of the Almighty. Eternity to the Godly is a day that hath no ſun-ſetting; Eternity to the Wicked is a night that hath no ſun-riſing. O I beſeech you my Brethren, every day ſpend ſome time upon the thoughts of Eternity. The ſerious thoughts of an Eternal Condition would be a great means to promote holineſs.

1. The thoughts of Eternity would make us very ſerious about our Souls. O my Soul, thou art ſhortly to flie into Eternity, a Condition that can never be reverſed or altered; how ſerious would this make us about our Heaven-born Souls! *Zeuxes* being once asked why he was ſo long in drawing a Picture, anſwered, *æternitati pingo*, I am now painting for Eternity. Oh how fervently would that man pray that thinks he is praying for Eternity. Oh how accurately and circumſpectly would that man live that thinks upon this moment hangs Eternity!

2. The thoughts of Eternity would make us ſlight and contemn all the things of this World. What is the World to him that hath Eternity alwayes in his Eye? Did we think ſeriouſly and ſolemnly of Eternity, we ſhould never over-value the Comforts of the World, nor over-grieve the Croſſes of the World.

1. We ſhould not over-value the Comforts of the World. Worldly comforts are very ſweet, but they are very ſwift, they are ſoon gone; the pleaſures of the World are but for a ſeaſon; juſt like *Noah*'s Dove that brought an Olive branch in her Mouth, but ſhe had Wings, and ſo did preſently flie from the Ark; ſo are all outward Comforts, they bring an Olive branch, but they have wings too, with which they flie away.

2. The thoughts of Eternity would make us not to over-grieve the Croſſes and Sufferings of the World. What are theſe Sufferings to Eternity? our Sufferings, ſayes the Apoſtle, are but for a while, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. What are all the Sufferings we can undergo in the World to Eternitie? Affliction may be laſting, but it is not everlaſting. Our Sufferings here are not worthy to be compared to an eternal weight of Glory.

And thus my Beloved, I have given you theſe Twenty Directions for your preeious Soules: I beſeech you treaſure them up as ſo many Jewels in the Cabinet of your Breaſt: Did you carry theſe Directions about you, they would be a moſt excellent Antidote to keep you from Sin, and an excellent means to preſerve the zeal of Pietie flaming upon the Altar of your Hearts.

I have many things yet to ſay to you, but I know not whether God will give me another Opportunitie; my ſtrength is now almoſt gone; I beſeech you, let theſe things which I have ſpoken make deep impreſſions upon all your ſouls. Conſider what hath been ſaid, and the Lord give you Underſtanding in all things.

SERMON III.

1 John 5. 1. & 21. Mr Sclater

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.

THis General Doctrine I have already delivered unto you from this Text, which indeed is the marrow and substance of the whole Chapter, That Gospel-believing is a Duty, which they that really perform are highly priviledged by to their greatest advantage: I have spoken concerning Gospel-believing, and that it is a duty, and that they that do really perform it are highly dignified and priviledged by it, as hath been made to appear from the Chapter; that which remains to be done, and shall be, as God enables

ables the work of this morning, is, to make improvement of this Doctrine, which is one of the moſt material and momentous Doctrines that can be preached to us. Goſpel believing it hath moſt precious priviledges entailed upon it; whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, that Jeſus is the Son of God, that Jeſus is come in the Fleſh, is born of God, knows God, and ſhall be eternally bleſſed of God, and with God; ſurely then the World runs upon a very great miſtake. I have hinted ſomething already to that purpoſe, but I have left the more full diſcuſſion and diſcovery of the matter until now. Why, who is there among the generality of common profeſſors that is not very pregnant to hold forth this to be their faith? if ſo be that it ſhould be put to the Queſtion, Friend, what is your Faith, what Belief are you of? why not one in a thouſand I think but will be apt to ſay, Why truly I will give you this Account, There is a Goſpel which is preached among us, and in the World, and this Goſpel doth hold forth this for true Doctrine, that Jeſus the Son of *Mary*, that was born at *Bethlehem*, is the Chriſt, is the Meſſiah which was promiſed by the Father, and which the World did live in expectation of ſo long; this Jeſus I believe is the Son of God, this Jeſus I verily believe is come in the Fleſh, and he is come to be the Saviour of the World; this is the Belief, and that which is the common profeſſion that is made by the generality of people. Why but will you conſider now this Text, and other Scriptures do ſpeak fully to this purpoſe, Whoſoever doth believe this, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that he is come in the Fleſh, whoſoever be-

believes this is of God, is born of God. And it doth clearly appear, and may be moſt convincingly made out, that many thouſands that profeſs their belief concerning theſe things, yet notwithſtanding are not born of God. Why certainly there muſt needs be a great and groſs fallacy in the buſineſs; Goſpel-faith and believing, it is not ſo common a thing as many take it to be; and therefore if this be Goſpel-faith, and that which doth intereſt Perſons in ſuch great and precious priviledges, truly it concerns us to look well to it, that we be not miſtaken concerning this Belief. Now this I would ſay, there is ſomething in it to be conſidered with reſpect to the time wherein Chriſt appeared viſibly to the World, and the after times wherein the Apoſtles did hold forth theſe great Doctrines of the Goſpel concerning Chriſt. And this we are to ſay, that in ſuch a time as that was when this was the Critical point as it were, the diſcriminating thing, in ſuch a time for any to make this profeſſion, and to hold forth this to be their Faith, and Belief, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, it was of high ſignification, and might very well, as to man, beget a comfortable confidence and hope concerning ſuch perſons, that certainly they were born of God, as to man, and according to rational Charity it might be very comfortable that ſuch Perſons as did thus believe, and profeſs this to be their Faith and Belief, there were ſome bleſſed beam upon their Souls; for mark you, it hath been thus in the World, and among the people of it concerning matters of God and Godlineſs, that there hath been ſuch and ſuch a Truth, that hath been the

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Critical truth, as I ſaid, that hath been, as I may ſo ſay, the *Shiboleth* whereby people are diſtinguiſhed one from another. I allude to that paſſage in *Judges* concerning the *Gileadites*; they made a profeſſion of themſelves to be ſuch and ſuch, and they were put to it to pronounce *Shiboleth*; they that could not ſpeak out the word, and clearly pronounce it, they were not judged to be the perſons that they profeſſed themſelves to be; but they that could do it, held their liberty; ſo ſometimes ſuch and ſuch a Doctrine is ordered out to be a diſtinguiſhing point, upon the account of the deſperate oppoſition that the World makes again it; and upon this Account the Prieſts and the Rulers, and the reſt of the world were deſperately bent againſt Jeſus; they called him Jeſus, but could not endure him to be called Chriſt the Son of God; it was an Act and Decree amongſt them, That whoſoever ſhould confeſs Jeſus to be the Chriſt, ſhould be put out of the Synagogue, ſhould be excommunicated. Now for perſons at ſuch time, wherein it was as much as their Liberty, it may be their Lives were worth, to own that Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of God, for perſons now at ſuch a time to own this Jeſus, that was in ſo mean a Condition, to be the Chriſt, there is very much in it, infinitely more than for perſons now to take up this profeſſion. Why? becauſe this Doctrine hath obtained in the World, and it is a Doctrine among Papiſts as well as Proteſtants; there is no ſuch danger now for Perſons to be of this Belief. But ſhall I ſay this, That for all that to believe this really according to the right account, and true genuine interpretation of Goſpel-believing,

lieving, the Caſe is the ſame with them and with us at this day, ſetting aſide the conſideration of times and time; the danger then, and the encouragement now; the Caſe is the ſame; Goſpel-believing of theſe truths according to a genuine interpretation of Goſpel-believing, it is the ſame now as then, and then as now: And therefore we muſt conſider and look further.

I would put theſe few things to your conſciences: You profeſs this to be your faith, you believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, that he is come in the fleſh; theſe things you profeſs to believe, and if you do ſo indeed, you are highly priviledged people, bleſſed of God, and ſhall be to all Eternity; but do you not miſtake? Do you believe this, that Jeſus is the Chriſt? How came you by this belief? What account can you give of it? How were you brought over to this Belief? Did you not come to this Faith and Belief by common report? You were born to this Doctrine; You look upon it as that which is the benefit you have by your being born in a Nation, and among a People that profeſs the Name of Chriſt, and this hath been inſtilled into you by education, and upon this account you take it: Did you ever buy this truth? It is a truth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, how came it to be yours? Did you ever buy this truth? Buy it? I ſay buy it? For the very truth is, we are never able to make out a good Title to any Goſpel-truth, until ſuch time as we can ſay we have bought it: How? why, by ſerious meditation, ſtudying the Scriptures, ſearching into them ſeriouſly, pondering and weighing of them, crying mightily to God, that he would manifeſt

ſeſt them to us, and encountring temptations from without, from within; being at a point willing to engage liberty and eſtate, and life, and all for this truths ſake: Can you ſay, We have pondered, and are ſo fully ſatisfied about it, as that if all the world ſhould come in a way of contradiction, and riſe up in oppoſition to us, and come with fire and ſword to beat us out of this truth; yet we are reſolved to ſtick to it? Can you give ſuch an account of your ſelves, that you have not taken it up upon a common report, but are able to ſay there hath been an inward Revelation made of theſe things to your ſouls, that there hath been a ſanctified work of the Spirit upon your underſtandings, that you come to ſee into the myſtery of theſe Goſpel-teſtimonies? Is there an habitual frame of Spirit wrought in you, whereby you are carried out to cloſe with every truth of God, and to cloſe with it upon this account, becauſe of a divine authority ſtampt upon it? when we give aſſent to common truths, but not with a common ſpirit, but in the ſtrength of an inward conviction, we aſſent to it upon the account of an unction that we have received from the holy one; and we aſſent to this and that truth upon the account of a divine authority which we ſee to be ſtampt upon it, and withal we find that there are ſuitable workings of our heart in the loves and deſires and delights of them to theſe truths (as there will be a kindly working of the heart where there is a right aſſent ſuitable to the truths aſſented to) as if there be a threatning, the Soul aſſents to it, and will tremble before God: If a promiſe be made, or a Goſpel-revelation, it will be accompanied with a holy rejoycing in God,

God, that ever he ſhould make ſuch a promiſe or Revelation; and then there will be a holy reſolution of Spirit, Come what will come, I will never part with this truth; I have bought the truth, that was my duty; and having bought it, I will never ſell it; that is my duty too; can we give ſuch an account as this? but then withal let me a little further improve that which I have already ſpoken from the Chapter.

You ſay this is your belief, That Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; but can you give an account of thoſe priviledges that are entailed upon this belief? for you muſt know that the priviledges which belong to ſuch, will ſerve as evidences that they are ſuch.

Now if you believe, it is your priviledge to be born of God; and this being born of God muſt be the evidence of this belief. Can you give an account of your being born of God? If you are not born of God, you do not believe, That Jeſus is the Chriſt. Can you give an account of your overcoming the World? Are you ſuch as are enabled to ſtand out in oppoſition to the errors, and hereſies, and corrupt doctrines and practices that are in the world? Can you bear up againſt the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life? If you are in ſlavery to the world, in bondage to the beggarly rudiments of the world, you are miſtaken, That Jeſus is the Chriſt: For he that believeth according to a true interpretation of Goſpel-believing, That Jeſus is the Chriſt, doth overcome the world, and by vertue of this belief he is enabled to get a conqueſt over the world and over the corruptions that are in it through luſt.

And

And then again, You profeſs to believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God: Oh! but are you able to give an account that you have believed into this Jeſus, and upon this Jeſus? for that is it the Text holds forth; He that believes that Jeſus is the Chriſt, doth believe on Jeſus the Chriſt; Are you by vertue of this believing which you profeſs, drawn out to a cloſing with Chriſt? do you roll your ſelves upon him? own him for Righteouſneſs and Salvation, and are willing to yield your ſelves up in ſubjection to him? You believe Jeſus to be the Chriſt; but do you believe on that Jeſus whom you profeſs to be the Chriſt? Now this being thus laid down as a Foundation, I would infer thus, and ſo go on to a farther branch of this Application; Either you do really believe with a Goſpel-believing theſe Truths and Doctrins concerning Chriſt, or you do not; Why, they that do profeſs they do, but in truth they do not, there is a clear and manifeſt contradiction which this profeſſion meets withal, and that upon the accounts I have formerly given, as alas this Profeſſion ſuffers contradiction generally; generally the Profeſſors of this Faith, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, do clearly make a flat contradiction; and I am very confident that there are thouſands, that if they ſhould be put to the Tryal, Will you ſtick to this Truth? If you do, it ſhall coſt you the loſs of your Liberty, and Eſtates, nay, your Life ſhall go for it. Oh! I am very apt to think that you ſhall have thouſands that will turn their backs upon this Profeſſion, renonnce this Profeſſion. Now concerning ſuch, this I would ſay.

First,

First, that the Condition of such persons as are not right in Gospel-believing is a most mournful & miserable Condition; however it may be with them in other respects, yet it is sad to think what a Condition they are in; for consider first of all, they that do not perform this Great Duty of Gospel-believing according to the truth and reality of it, I will tell you what they do, they do give God the lye, they do by interpretation tell God to his face, that he is a very Lyar; and what higher blaspeming can there be then to give the lye to the God of Truth! every one will be apt to bless themselves, and say, Oh far be it from me, God forbid that I should be charged with such a horrid impiety as this! Oh but Brethren, the very truth is, it is a very common thing by interpretation to give the ly to God; & al that do not believe according to that Gospel-believing that you have heard, do tell God to his face that he is a Lyar. How doth that appear? Why take a little help, such as I am able to give you; to profess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that he came to be the Saviour of the world, is ordered out to be our Righteousness, is sent of God to preach Liberty to Captives, to heal diseased Souls, and to deliver poor Creatures from the bondage of the Devil; these things People generally profess to believe; but mark you now, they never come to Christ, nor never set in with him upon this account, and to this purpose, Oh Lord thou art the Jesus, the Annointed of God; I come to thee for life, I am a poor dead Creature, I am in a state of unrighteousness, and thou art given to be for Righteousness; Lord I fly to thee for it, I am a poor diseased

creature; the Plague is upon my ſoul, and thou art appointed to heal the Soul of the Plague; I come to thee for healing. There is not one of thouſands that come thus to Chriſt. Will you now ſee how the lye is given to God? I profeſs for my part, ſaith one, I know no ſuch matter; Jeſus is the Chriſt, and I profeſs to believe ſo, and he is appointed of God for ſuch and ſuch things; he is ſent to preach liberty to the captives; I know not that there is any ſuch bondage. Chriſt came to ſave ſinners; alas I know no need of any ſuch ſalvation by him; he came to heal diſeaſed Souls; I am well enough, what need have I of Chriſt? what is this but to give the lye to God? He that receives not Chriſt, makes God a lyar; for he doth in effect ſay, Lord thou ſayeſt ſo and ſo concerning the World; I know nothing of all this; and ſo the lye is given to God; And is it nothing to give the lye to the great God, the God of truth? And I tell you while you profeſs this Jeſus to be the Chriſt, the Sonne of God, and in the mean time flye not to him; you believe him to be the Sonne of God, and that all Authority is given unto him, and you will not ſubject to his Authority, why you give the lye to God, and is this nothing?

2. Conſider the ſad condition of ſuch as believe not according to a right Goſpel-believing; they are ſuch as are lyable to the dreadfulleſt touches from the Devil that poſſibly can be; He that believeth is born of God, overcomes the World, and is enabled to keep himſelf, that the wicked one doth not touch him with a mortiferous touch; but I tell thee whatever thou art, that art under the

power

power of unbelief, thou art in danger of a dreadful touch from the prince of darkneſs; and if thou liveſt and dieſt in a ſtate of unbelief, thou wilt fall under the power of condemnation. I remember what our Saviour ſpeaks, and conſider well of it, *You ſtand out in oppoſition to my Doctrine*; *but I tell you, Except you believe that I am he, you ſhall dye in your ſinnes*; a dreadful word, *you ſhall dye in your ſinnes*, and what then, *be damned eternally*; this is the condition of all ſuch as are in a ſtate of unbelief: but then on the other hand, in caſe we be able to give a good account of our believing that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Sonne of God, and of our believing on him concerning whom theſe Teſtimonies are given, Oh what cauſe have all ſuch to rejoyce in their condition! the condition of ſuch perſons is happy beyond all expreſſion and comprehenſion, that have owned theſe Truths, owned that Jeſus of whom the faithful Teſtimonies are given.

Now all the Chapter, according to the account I have given you, comes in to the purpoſe of comforting and rejoycing the hearts of ſuch Perſons. Here is your comfort now; really believing according to a right interpretation of Goſpel-believing, this is your priviledge, you are the perſons that are born from above, you are the perſons that ſhall be enabled to overcome the World, to bear up againſt all oppoſition that men and Devils can make againſt you; you are the Perſons that have the Witneſs within you, and you ſhall be able to bear up againſt all the contradictions of Sinners; you are the Perſons that have Chriſt, and have eternal life by him: you ſhall have it, nay

you have it already; *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath eternal life*; he hath it in the beginnings of it, and ſhall have it in the compleat ſtate of it; being brought over to Goſpel-believing, you may come with boldneſs to God in a way of prayer, with holy confidence that whatever elſe you ask believing, you ſhall have a good account of it; God doth not neglect any believing prayer of a believing ſoul: And all the priviledges of the Goſpel are entailed upon you, and you are entitled unto them, and you ſhall have the benefit of them while you live, and when you die unto all Eternity; well it may be ſaid of ſuch a perſon, Bleſſed is he and ſhe that hath believed with a Goſpel-believing Goſpel-Truths and Teſtimonies concerning Chriſt, and on Chriſt, on whom thoſe Teſtimonies are given; for there ſhall be a full and perfect accompliſhment of whatever God hath ſpoken with his mouth concerning ſuch.

And then laſtly, If the Grace of God hath brought us over to a cloſing with Chriſt, of whom theſe truths and teſtimonies are given; why the laſt branch of the Application is but this, That you would but juſtifie your believing, and labour to manifeſt the reality of your believing, accoding to the Goſpel, by a ſuitable walking; this is that that ſhall be the cloſing up of this Application.

Oh brethren, Let us conſider well, our Saviour tells us in *Mat.* 11. *Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children.* Why, if ever we mean to approve our ſelves to be Wiſdoms Children, our care muſt be for to give in our Juſtification of Wiſdoms ſayings, and for

for to carry it in a congruousness and suitableness unto that Gospel-believing which we profess to be by grace brought over to. Why, but what is that you will say? Why consider the Text, and see what remains of the Chapter. I shall make it out, give it up to you in this way:

Why, First of all this one special duty that lies upon you, That you would study your Mercy, and know what God hath been to you, and done for you, and how highly you are dignified, and not to be alwayes in a fluctuating state; and upon the questioning and disputing point; but to come to some well grounded confidence; that you may be able to say, We know that this and that is our condition, and this and that is our dignified priviledge that we are planted under.

Do but mark how the point in hand doth charge this upon us, in the 13. verse of this Chapter, *These things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have Eternal Life.* Here is your duty according to what the Text it self doth charge upon you; if you be such as by grace are brought over to a Gospel-believing, the Apostle *John* that did write this Epistle, and I from it, preach unto you in the Name of the Lord, and by authority from him, that this is your duty, to know that you are persons that have Eternal Life, that you are such as Christ by his blood hath made a purchase of Eternal Life for; that he hath by his blood once for all entred into the holy place, that is not made with hands, that he might prepare for you, and that you might have the possession of those blessed mansions that he hath made preparation of.

Eternal Life it is yours, and you may be bold to claim it, and you are bound to hope and rejoyce in the expectation of the full enjoyment of it, and not to be always upon the qneſtion, and diſputing point, but to go on with a holy confidence towards God, according to what the Apoſtle expreſſes, 1 *Cor.* 2. *We know that when this Earthly Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we ſhall have a houſe not made with hands, &c.*

But then, a ſecond thing that I have to charge upon you is this, That you would acknowledge with all thankfulneſs and enlargedneſs of heart, to God the riches of his mercy, and grace to you, that hath been pleaſed to cull you out of an unbelieving world, and bring you over to the Goſpel, and to the participations that are by Chriſt, according to the *Goſpel*: Oh! This you ſhould ſet your hearts upon, by admiring the riches of Gods grace; and ſay, Lord, Why ſhould'ſt thou manifeſt thy ſelf to me, and not to the world! That many thouſands ſhould live and die in the total ignorance of Chriſt, and the *Goſpel*-myſteries, or elſe live and die in an empty profeſſion; and yet that God ſhould be pleaſed to pitch upon me! This is that that the Text doth hint unto us in *verſe* 19. of this Chapter. Oh! ſaith he in a triumphing manner, *We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in wickedneſs*: Oh! our mercies and the riches of grace that hath appeared to us, while the whole world that lies in wickedneſs, is put into the malignant one, lyes in the Devil, for he is the malignant evil one, while the whole world lyes in the Devil in malignity! Oh! It is a ſad condition infinitely more ſad then for a man

man to lye in the moſt noiſomeſt ſtinking ditch, or in the loathſomeſt kennel; why this is that that heightens the mercy to poor ſouls that are called by grace according to the purpoſe of God, that while the whole world lyes in wickedneſs, and ſo are like to lye; yea, and to lye in hell to all Eternity, that God ſhould pleaſe to lay you in the boſom of his Son, and to take you into the arms of his mercy; this is that that ſhould heighten our thankfulneſs. I may make uſe of that expreſſion which we find in *Acts* 4. when *Paul* and *Barnabas* came unto a company of Heathens, and they ſaw what great things were done by them, and took notice of the gracious ſpirit that they diſcovered, ſure ſay they, *The Gods are come among us in the likeneſs of men.* Conſidering the ſtate of times, and what a height of wickedneſs many at this day are grown up unto, the dreadful ſwearing, blaſpheming of God and his ways: truly judge of it your ſelves, whether we may not ſay the devils are come among us in the likeneſs of men. Why now oh! How ſhould we heighten our love and thankfulneſs to God, that ſhould pleaſe in free grace to bring us over to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt!

But then fourthly, as many as are brought over to *Goſpel-believing*, this is your duty to ſtudy, and endeavour what you can your advantages in *faith*; and ſo the Apoſtle gives it in charge here in the Chapter in *verſe* 13. *Theſe things have I writ to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the Son of God.* This is that you ſhould ſet about. If God hath brought you

over to a closing with Christ, and an embracing of the testimonies concerning him, beleeve more and more, labour for your advancement, and let it be your Prayer, *Good Lord encrease our faith:* Labour that you may be clear in your apprehensions of Gospel-mysteries, and that you may be more strong in your adherence to Christ, of whom those Gospel-testimonies are given, and that you may not only come to have an adhering faith, but to an assuring faith; that you may not be like waves tossed and tumbled up and down; but that you may come to be rooted and established, and grounded in your faith; that you may not come to be unsetled by heresie, corrupt Doctrines, or the Apostacy of others, but that you may be stedfast and unmoveable.

Yet further fifthly, This is to be given in charge to such as do believe according to the Gospel, that they carry it suitably to a believing state, as in those particulars that I have insisted upon, so in a deportment congruous and suitable to the priviledges which belong to believing: You are born of God; carry it as men and women that are so indeed: What! Born of God, the Sons and Daughters of God! What! and not live according to God? and not study conformity to God? I remember what he speaks there concerning *Amnon, How is it, that thou being the Kings Son, art lean from day to day?* How is it, that we that profess to be the Sons and Daughters of God, are lean and lank, not more improved? that we do not shew forth God, and express Christ? This lies in the beginning of the Chapter, *If you be born of God, remember that you be born of him that is the God of Love;*

Love; And therefore you are to manifeſt this birth and your believing, and your being born of God, by loving God, and by loving them that are born of God; *He that believeth is born of God; and he that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him.* The God of Love doth beget a People of Love; a loving God, a loving People; And this is that that you ſhould expreſs your Believing by, and your Adoption by; by the Love you bear to God, and the Children of God.

A hateful ſpiteful ſpirit, where it doth diſcover it ſelf, ſpeaks thoſe perſons not to be born of God, but of the Devil; carry it as Believers, as perſons of God, by ſtudying a conformity to God, and by keeping his Commandments, ſubjecting your ſelves to his Authority; not living according to your own Luſts; but according to the Laws and Rules which God hath given you, ſaith the Apoſtle here, *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandements.*

It is not a love in Word, and in Tongue, but in Reality; a love diſcovering it ſelf by a conſciencious care to hold conformity to all the Will of God; And if any ſhould object, This is a hard ſaying, who can bear it? ſaith the Apoſtle, No ſuch matter, there is never a Believing Soul will ſay the Commandements of Chriſt are grievous or burdenſome; no, they are light to them that are brought over to the faith of the Goſpel.

And the laſt thing I have to charge upon you, upon the account of your Goſpel-believing, and being brought over to a cloſing with Chriſt, it is this, and ſo upon the matter I have given you an account of the ſubſtance of this precious Chapter, having

having reduced it to that general Doctrine I propounded before: I say the last thing is this, That you would walk suitable to a believing state, by being very careful concerning your Worships that you do perform, that they be according to God, and according to the Gospel; and this is that which the Apostle closes the Chapter withal in the 21 Verse, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols. Amen.* As I take it, in the former Translation it was Babes, *Babes, keep your selves from Idols*; here it is *Little Children.* I observe in this Epistle the Apostle makes a distinction of Believers into three Ranks, as you shall find in the second chapter, *I write unto you Little Children, I write unto you young men, and I write unto you Fathers*; in the close of the Epistle, he concludes with this *charge* to *Little Children*; now whether he includes all the rest under this Title of *Little Children*, I forbear to dispute; but sure I am, it is a duty lies upon one and other, whether they be Babes or Young men, or Aged Fathers in Christ; Whatever our rank and condition be, I am sure of this, This is a great Duty that lies upon all that will approve themselves in Godliness, and to be bronght over to the faith of the Gospel, that they look to their Worships, and that they take heed of Idols; as if he should say, He that is born of God, he keeps himself that the wicked One doth not touch him. Oh *Little Children*, shew forth that spiritual Ability that by grace you are furnished withal, by being able to keep your selves from Idols.

It might be said, What is this to us? Are we in danger of Idols? True, well might the Apostle give in such a *Charge* to them in those times, when the

the greateſt part of the World were in a ſtate of Heatheniſme, and in eſtrangement from Chriſt, and the myſteries of the Goſpel; But this I ſay, it doth really concern Chriſtians in Goſpel-times, that have had the breakings out of the Goſpel-light, and the knowledge of Goſpel-myſteries, to be careful of this *Charge*, that they keep themſelves from Idols; there were the Idols of the Heathens; grant it, and ſo ſtill there are a generation of People that our Souls ſhould mourn over to conſider their ſtate, that are wrapt up in ignorance of *God*, know nothing of the true God, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and it is the ſtate and condition of the Jews at this day; and what a ſad condition are they in! Grant it that they do not worſhip Idols after the manner of the Heathens; yet they worſhip not the true *God*, becauſe they worſhip not God in *Chriſt*: for ſaith the Apoſtle, *Whoever ſinnes, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Chriſt, he hath not God; He that abides in the Doctrine of the Chriſt, he hath the Father and the Sonne*: And ſo the Jewes at this day, they not abiding: not owning the Doctrine of Chriſt, they have not God, becauſe they have not the Father and the Son; this is their condition: And thus I ſay, there were not only the Idols of the Heathens. Oh! but ſadly be it ſpoken, there are Idols among Perſons pretending to Chriſt, and *Goſpel*-faith, and the Doctrine concerning *Grace* by Jeſus Chriſt.

How many Idols and Idolators are there? I might tell you the Covetous perſon is an Idolater, the Voluptuous perſon, and the Self-juſtitiary ſets up his own Righteouſneſs, and Idolizeth that:

But

But I ſay this, there are Idols among Chriſtians; Papiſts hold forth the Name of Chriſt, but yet what woful Idolatry is there among them? There was the Dragon-worſhip in the time of the Heathens, and in the room of that, there is come up the Beaſt-worſhip, and of that Worſhip the generality of the world runs upon; and it concerns us to keep from Popiſh Idolatry, it being the groſſeſt Idolatry that ever was, becauſe there is the faireſt pretence of worſhipping JESUS, and yet they turn him into an Idol. What elſe means their worſhipping and bowing to Images, their breaden gods, and the like? Oh! therefore it concerns us to keep our ſelves from Idols; And there is a Scripture, if it were but well ſtudied, would cauſe trembling of Heart, and make all that have any care of their Souls to look about them; that Scripture I refer you to, it is in *Revel.* 13. compared with the 20th. In *Revel.* 13. 11. whereas before there was Dragon-worſhip, it is ſaid here, *I beheld another Beaſt comming out of the Earth, and he had two Hornes like a Lambe, and he ſpake as a Dragon, and he exerciſeth all the Power of the firſt Beaſt before him, and cauſeth the Earth, and them that dwell therein, to worſhip the firſt Beaſt, whoſe deadly wound was healed:* now look at the 8. verſe, ſaith he, *And all the dwellers upon the earth ſhall worſhip him, whoſe names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world.* Oh! it is a terrible word, and that that ſhould make us to fear and tremble, leſt in any kind we ſhould be drawn into the worſhip of the Beaſt; for as many as were not written in the book of Life of the Lamb, they were drawn in to the Worſhip of the Beaſt. This is

that

that that ſhould make us keep our ſelves from Idols, from whatſoever hath but ſo much as a Tincture of Superſtition and Idolatry; and the rather, conſidering that other Scripture in the 20th. of the *Revelation*, and the laſt verſe, *And whoſoever was not found written in the book of life, was caſt into the lake of fire*; All that are not written in the Lambs book of life, are prevailed to perform the worſhip with the Beaſt, and not being writ there, muſt be tumbled into the Lake for ever.

This therefore concerns us, to keep from Idolatry, from whatſoever hath a tendency that way, and that hath any tincture of Superſtition upon it; and conſider with your ſelves, that our Duty is in matters of Worſhip, and in things concerning the Worſhip of God, to ſee to it, that we keep a humble dependance upon God, that we walk not according to the will of men, but according to God; *You were bought with a price, be not Servants of Men.* We are to walk by a Line, by a Plummet, and what is not warranted by the word of God, or maintainable by Arguments drawn from it, we ſhould not cloſe with.

And for the cloſing up of all, do but conſider how this chapter, and the things that I have ſpoken to you, and preached from it, how they do all influence this Exhortation, *Little children, keep your ſelves from Idols*; ſee to it, that you approve your ſelves in holy worſhip to God, and the Lord Jeſus. Do but argue thus, You profeſs to be Believers; and is it not your duty to anſwer to this profeſſion? Your Faith is a pure Faith, and an obediential Grace; it is a Grace that will tutor you to hang upon Chriſt, and his Appointments and Inſtitutions;

tions; And therefore being Believers, ſtudy to keep your ſelves from Idols, and whatever is not conſonant to the will of God concerning Worſhip.

You believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; keep your ſelves from Idols in this reſpect; for he is come into the world, and hath ſhewed the pattern of his Houſe; and then you are born of God; carry it like a people that are born of God, that are high born, and credit your holy Profeſſion, by keeping a dependance upon that God of whom you are born: And then being believers, you are born of God, and have overcome the world, and therefore ſhew forth your Heroick Spirit, by ſtanding out in oppoſition to Idols, and whatever is contrary to ſound Doctrine, and the power of godlineſs.

You have an Unction from the Holy one, and this engages you to look to it, that you keep your ſelves from Idols; *And then we know* (ſaith he) *that the Sonne of God is come, and hath given us underſtanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true; even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* And thereupon he brings in this, *Little children, keep your ſelves from Idols*: as if he ſhould ſay, This is the true God, God in Chriſt, Jeſus Chriſt the Son of the Father, this is the true God, and he hath eternal life with him; other gods are falſe gods, and what benefit will you have by following them, and performing worſhip to them? Nothing but eternal death; falſe gods can beſtow no eternal life upon you; but this is the true God, and he can give you eternal life; And therefore, *Little children keep your ſelves from Idols.*

And

And now yet one word more. I would not occaſion any diſcompoſure of ſpirit that is not becoming you; But this I muſt ſay, for ought I know, you have the words of a Dying man, and we uſe to ſay, that the words of Dying men they are apt to take ſomewhat a deep impreſſion; I mean a Dying man, not in properneſs of ſpeech according to nature; and if it ſhould be ſo, I hope there would be cauſe of rejoycing on my part; But I ſpeak the words of a Dying man in reſpect of Miniſterial Office.

I ſuppoſe you all know there is an Act come forth by Supream Authority, and it is not for us to quarrel at all, but to ſubmit to it, and hold correſpondency with it ſo far as we can, with a good Conſcience; and there being many Injunctions that many, beſides my ſelf, cannot comply withall, therefore we are willing to ſubmit to the penalty inflicted.

This I ſay, you have for many years had the benefit of my poor Labours; I have fulfilled near up towards 40 years, and have performed my ſervice to God, Chriſt, and his People, and I bleſſe his Name, not without acceptance and ſucceſs. My Work, ſo far as I know, in this courſe, as in the Weekly courſe, is now at an end; my Deſire is, that you whoſe Hearts have been inclinable to wait upon God in the way of my Miniſtry, may be kept faithful to God, and that you may have the bleſſing of the everlaſting Covenant comming upon your Souls, and that you may have the power of this Doctrine, held forth in this Sermon, put forth upon your Hearts; that as you do believe that Jeſus

Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus is the Son of God, that as you profess these things, you may carry it suitably to your profession, that you may walk in Love to God, Love to Christ, and love to one another; that you may labour to manifest a noble generous Spirit in overcoming the world in Errors, Corruptions, false Doctrines, and unwarrantable Worship; that you may in all things labour to approve your selves: *And little Children keep your selves from Idols. Amen.*

SER-

SERMON IV.

Mr Watson:

ISAIAH 3. 10, 11.

Say to the Righteous it ſhall be well with him; for they ſhall eat the fruit of their Doings. Wo unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.

THis Text is like to Iſraels Pillar of Cloud, it hath a light ſide and a dark ſide; it hath a light ſide to the godly, *Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with him*; and it hath a dark ſide, *to the wicked it ſhall be ill with him*; both you ſee are rewarded, both the

righteous and the wicked; but there's a vast difference the one hath a reward of mercy, and the other a reward of Justice.

I shall begin with the first of these, *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him.* This Scripture was written in a very sad and calamitous time, as you may read in the beginning of the Chapter, *The mighty man, the man of war doth cease, the prudent and the ancient, both the Judge and the Prophet shall be taken away.* This was a very sad time with the Church of God in *Jerusalem*; if the Judge be taken away, where will there be any piety? and if the prophet be taken away; where will there be any equity? the whole body Politick was now running to ruin, and almost in the rubbish: Now in this sad juncture of time God would have this Text to be written, and it is methinks like a Rain-bow in the Clouds. God would have his people comforted in the midst of all these afflictions; *Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him.*

The Proposition that lies in the words is this:

That however things go in the World, *It shall be well with the righteous.*

This is an Oracle from Gods own mouth; and therefore we are not to question or dispute it; *Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him* I might multiply Scriptures for the proof this, but I shall instance but in one, *Eccles.* 8.12. *Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.* It is a golden maxime to be disputed; I know it shall go well with them that fear God,

For

For the illuſtration of this conſider two things.

Firſt, What is meant here by the *righteous man.*

Secondly, Why however things go, *it ſhall be well with him.*

Firſt, Who is meant here by the *righteous man.* There is a Threefold righteouſneſſe.

Firſt, a legal righteouſneſs, and ſo *Adam* in this ſence was ſaid to be righteous, when he did wear the robe of innocency; *Adams* heart did agree with the Law of God exactly, as a well made Dial goes with the Sun; but this righteouſneſs is loſt and forfeited.

Secondly, There is a Moral righteouſneſſe, and thus he is ſaid to be righteous, that is, adorned with Moral Vertues, who is prudent, juſt, temperate, and the like.

Thirdly, There is an Evangelical righteouſneſſe, and that is meant here; and this Evangelical righteouſneſſe is twofold: A righteouſneſſe by imputation, and a righteouſneſſe by implantation.

Firſt, There is a righteouſneſſe by imputation, and that is, when Chriſts righteouſneſſe is made over to us; and this righteouſneſſe beloved, is as truly ours to juſtifie us, as it is Chriſts, to beſtow upon us.

Secondly, There is a righteousneſſe by implantation, which is nothing elſe but Gods infuſing of the ſeed and habits of grace into the heart, the planting of holineſſe in a man, and making him partaker of the divine nature: Now this is to be righteous in the ſight of God, to have a righteouſneſſe of imputation, and a righteouſneſſe of implantation; and ſo much for the firſt thing.

The ſecond thing is to ſhew you why however things go in the world, it ſhall be well with this righteous man; and it muſt needs be thus for two reaſons,

Firſt, Becauſe he that is righteous, hath his greateſt evil removed, his ſinne is pardoned; and therefore it muſt needs be well with him. Sin is a thorn in a mans conſcience; now when this thorn is pluckt out in forgiveneſſe and remiſſion, then is it well with that man: Forgiveneſſe of ſin, in Scripture, is called the lifting off of ſin; ſo it is in the Hebrew in *Job 7. Lord why doſt thou not lift off my ſin?* It is a Metaphor taken from a weary man that goes under a burthen, ready to ſink under it, and another mad comes and lifts off this burthen; ſo doth the great God, when the burthen of ſin is ready to ſink the conſcience, God lifts off this burthen from the conſcience, and lays it upon Chriſts ſhoulders, and he carries it; now he that hath his burthen thus carried, it is well for him, how ever things go. Pardon and forgiveneſſe of ſinne it is a crowning bleſſing, it is a jewel in a believers crown: Pardon of ſin is a multiplying mercy, it brings a great many

mercies

mercies along with it; whom God pardons he adopts; whom God pardons, he inveſts with holineſſe and with glory. Pardon of ſin is ſuch a mercy that it is enough to make a ſick man well. *Iſa.* 32. 24. *The inhabitants ſhall not ſay they are ſick, the people that dwell therein ſhall be forgiven their iniquity.* The ſenſe of pardon takes away the ſenſe of pain; it muſt needs then be well with the righteous, his greateſt evil is removed.

Secondly, How ever things go, *it ſhall be well with the righteous*, becauſe God is his portion, *Pſal.* 16. 5. *The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, the lines are fallen to me in pleaſant places.* In God all things are to be found; and all that is in God, is engaged for the good of the righteous; his power is his to help him; his wiſdome is his to teach him; his ſpirit is his to ſanctifie him; and his mercy is his to ſave him. God is the righteous mans portion; and can God give a greater gift to us, than to give us himſelf to us? God is a rich portion, the Angels riches; God is a ſafe and a ſure portion, for his name is a ſtrong tower; he is a portion that can never be ſpent, for he is infiniteneſſe; and he is a portion can never be loſt, for he is Eternity; *Thou art my portion for ever Pſal.* 73. 26. And ſurely, it is well with them that have God for their portion: it is not well with them that are happy? why if God be our portion, we are happy, *Pſal.* 144. 16. *Happy is the people whoſe God is the Lord.* And ſo much for the Doctrinal part.

The explication of this point may afford abun-

dance of comfort to every godly man; to every person fearing God in this Congregation, God hath sent me this day with a Commission to comfort you, O that I might drop in the oil of gladnesse into every broken and troubled spirit; *Say to the righteous it shall be well with him*: Here's good news from heaven, however things are, yet still it is well with the righteous.

But here's a great question to be answered, How doth it appear that it is well with the righteous? for we often see it is worst with him; he is deprived of his comforts, he is made the reproach of the world for Christ, yea many times he loseth his life? how then is it well with the righteous?

I answer, yet still is it well with the righteous, though he meet with troubl in the world, and one wave riseth upon the neck of another: yet is it well with the righteous, as appears in these following particulars.

First, All the troubles that a righteous man meets with, turn to his good, and so it is well with him: That's a famous Scripture, *Ier.* 24. 5. *Whom I have sent out of this place, into the Land of the Chaldeans, for their good.* Gods own Israel were transported into *Babylon* among their enemies, for their good. The troubles of the righteous are onely a means to purge out their sins, and that's for their good, I have read a story of one *Pereus*, who running at another with a sword to kill him, by accident the sword onely run into his impostume, and broke that. Thus all the evils

and

and troubles of the righteous, do but ſerve to cure them of the impoſthume of pride, and to make them more humble. When the body of a Saint is afflicted, his ſoul that revives and flouriſhes in grace; like two lawrel trees that *I* have read of, that when one withered, the other flouriſhed; ſo wen the body is afflicted, yet grace flouriſhes. God doth diſtill out of the bittereſt drugs his glory and our ſalvation. That that the world looks upon as a puniſhment, that God makes medicinal, to heal the ſoul. Well then may it be well with the righteous; the rod of God upon a Saint, is but onely Gods pencil, whereby he d.aws his image more lively upon the ſoul. God never ſtretcheth the ſtrings of his Viol, but to make the muſick ſo much the ſweeter.

Secondly, In the midſt of all the troubles that befal the righteous, yet ſtill it is well with them, in regard of thoſe inward heart-revivings that God gives them; we ſee a godly man in miſery. but we ſee not his comforts; we ſee his priſon grates, but we hear not that ſweet muſick that he enjoys in his conſcience. God ſweetens to his people outward troubles with inward peace. It is the title that is given to God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 7. *The God that comforteth them that are caſt down.* The bee can gather honey as well from the thiſtle and bitter herb, as from the ſweet flower: and a Child of God can gather joy out of his ſorrow; out of the very carcaſſe ſometimes he fetcheth honey.

When the body is in pain, the ſoul may be at eaſe as when a mans head akes, yet his heart may

be well; Thus it is well with the Righteous, God gives him inward comforts that revive him, and sweeten outward pain.

3. In times of calamity and trouble, yet still is it well with the Righteous, because many times God hears his people in time of trouble; in a storm God will have a care of his Jewels, he will hide them, and suffer them not to be carried away; and thus he makes good that Scripture literally, *Psal.* 91. 4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his Wings shalt thou trust, no evil shall touch thee.* God oftentimes verifies this Scripture literally, he makes his Angels to be his Peoples Lifeguard to hide them and to defend them. When a Flood was comming on the World, God provided an Ark to hide *Noah* in; When *Israel* was carried and transported into *Babylon*, God hides *Jeremy*, and gives him his life for a prey. *Jerem.* 39. 11, 21.

And in this sence the Saints of God are called his hidden Ones. *Ps.* 83. 3. Why so? not onely because they are hid in Gods decree, and hid in Christs wounds, but oftentimes God hides them in time of common danger & calamity; they are hidden Ones; Thus God reserved to himself seven thousand that had not bowed the Knee to *Baal*; the Prophet knew not of any, but God knew of seven thousand that he had hid; and in this sence it is well with the Righteous in time of publick misery.

But you will say sometimes it is worse than all this with them; sometimes the Righteous dye and perish, and are carried away with a tempest; How is it well with them then? yes, yet still it is well with the Righteous;

teous; though their Life be taken away, yet ſtill it is well with them, and that in a two-fold ſence.

Firſt, Many times God takes the Righteous by death in great mercy; he takes them away that they ſhall not ſee the miſeries that are comming upon a Land; as *Virgil* the Heathen Poet ſaid, *They were happy that dyed before their Countrey*, meaning, before they ſaw the ruines of their Countrey. And truly many times God takes away his Children in mercy, that they ſhall not ſee the miſeries that are comming on a Land; you have a pregnant and clear Scripture for this, 1 *Kings* 14. 13. *He only of the houſe of* Jeroboam *ſhall come to his grave*; it is ſpoken of *Abijah* his Sonne. He only ſhall come to his grave, becauſe in him there was found ſome good thing towards the *Lord* God of *Iſrael*. God would put this man into his grave betimes in mercy becauſe he ſhould not ſee the evil that was comming upon the *Land*. You have a parallel Scripture to this. 2 *Kings* 22. v. *ult*. it is ſpoken of *Ioſiah*, *I will gather thee to thy Fathers, thou ſhalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eye ſhall not ſee the evil that I will bring upon this place*. VVhy, *Ioſiah* died in battel: How is it ſaid then that he went to his grave in peace? the meaning is this, becauſe *Ioſiah* was an holy man, he had made his peace with God, and ſo went to his grave in peace; and becauſe he ſhould not ſee the evil approaching, therefore God gathered him to his grave in peace.

Ierome ſpeaks thus of *Nepotian*, it ſeems *Ierome* lived to ſee ſome troubles before he died, meeting with ſome ſtormes; *Now* (ſaid he) *how happy is my friend* Nepotian, *that ſees not theſe troubles? happy is he that is gotten out of the ſtorm, and is in the haven.* Thus

Thus *Luther* died in mercie before the troblos of *Germany* begsn to break forth. Thus it is well with the Righteous, though they do die; God takes them away in mercie, that they may not see approaching evils.

Secondly, Though the righteous doe die, are taken away, and perish in a storme, yet is it well with them, because death cannot hurt them; it can neither hurt their Bodies, nor yet their Souls; the Bodie is safe, it doth not perish, though it doth die; the bodies of the Saints are verie precious dust in Gods account; the Lord locks up these Jewels in the grave, as in a Cabinet; the bodies of the Saints lie mellowing and ripening in the Grave, till a blessed time of resurrection: How precious is the dust of a Belieber! though the World minde it not, yet it's precious to God. The Husbandman hath some corn in the barn, and other corn in his ground; the corn in the ground is as precious to him as that in the barn: Why the bodies of the Saints in the grave, are Gods corn in the ground, and God makes a verie precious account of this corn; the bodies of the Saints shall be more glorious and blessed than ever at the resurrection. *Tertullian* sayes the Bodies shall be then *Corpora Angelica*; the Bodie shall be angellfied, in regard of that beautie and lustre which shall be put upon it: As it is with a piece of silke or cloth that is died of a Purple scarlet colour, it is made more bright and illustrious thon it was before. Thus it is with the bodies of the Saints, they are died of a brighter colour at the resurrection, they are made like Chsists glorious bodie, *Phil.* 3. 20. Thus shall it be well with the righteous

righteous in their bodies; they shall not perish.

Secondly, At death it shall be well with the righteous, as to their souls. O it it shall be a blessed time; Methinks it is with a Saint at the time of death just as it was with *Paul* in his voyage to *Rome*; the ship did break into many peices, but yet he got safe to shore; so it is with a believer, though the ship of his body may be snapt and broken at death; yet the passenger is safe, the soul gets safe to shore even to the heavenly *Jerusalem*; then surely it is well with the righteous at his death; the day of a believers death is the birth-day of his blessedness: it is his ascension day to heaven; his death day is his marriage day with Jesus Christ; faith doth but contract us here, but at death the Nuptials shall be solemnized in glory: and shall it not be well with the righteous? they shall see God face to face: And says *Austin*, *Ipse Deus sufficit ad premium.* It will be heaven enough to have the sight of God. The Saints shall then entert into joy; joy now enters into them here, but then they shall enter into joy; they shall drink of that pure river that runs from God the everlasting fountain.

Thus you see it shall go well with the righteous however things go, though troubles come, though death it self come; and therefore let those that are the people of God comfort themselves with these words.

To conclude this first point, what encouragement is this to all you that hear me now, to begin to be righteous! This Text may tempt us all to be godly.

Say

Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with him; when things go never ſo ill with him; yet ſtill it ſhall be well with him: Grant that all things are ill with you in your eſtate, in your relations, yet then if you are righteous, all things ſhall be well with you, your pardon is ſealed, you are an Heir of Gods promiſes, all things ſhall work for your good; you have God for your Father, you have heaven in reverſion for your inheritance; and is it not well with you? how may this make us all in love with godlineſſe, how may this tempt us to be godly? for if ever we would enjoy happineſſe, we muſt eſpouſe holineſſe; *Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with him.* And ſo much for the firſt propoſition. The godly mans comfort in life and death.

Now if this will not prevail with men to make them leave their ſins and become righteous, I muſt paſs in a few words to the next branch of my Text, to ſcare men out of their ſins, to affright them out of their wickedneſſe: *Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* This my beloved is the dark ſide of the cloud, and it may cauſe in every wicked man that hears me, a palpitation and trembling at the heart, *wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him.* And ſo the Propoſition is this:

That when things ſeem to be well with wicked men, it ſhall be ill with them at laſt.

Though things ſeem to be well with the wicked, they have more then heart can wiſh, yet it ſhall be ill with

with them at last; *Ve improbo, Woe to the wicked; it shall be ill with them.* In *Eccles.* 8. 12. *It shall not be well with the wicked, nor shall he prolong his dayes, that are as a shadow, because he feareth not God.* The God of *Truth* hath pronounced it, this is as true as God is true, *It shall not be well with the wicked.*

Now that I may a little clear this to you, I shall demonstrate it to you in these following Particulars:

1. It is ill with the Wicked in this life.

2. It is ill with him at his death.

3. It is ill with him at the day of Judgement.

4. It is ill with him after the day of Judgement.

First, It is ill with the Wicked in this life. There's hardly a wicked man that hears me, that thinks so, when he hath the affluence and confluence of outward comforts, when he eats of the fat, and drinks of the sweet, he will hardly believe that Minister that tells him it shall be ill with him; yea but it is ill with the Wicked even in this life; for is it not ill with that man that hath a curse, yea the curse of God entailed upon him? My Text pronounceth a curse against the sinner, *Va improbo, Wo to the wicked*: And can that man thrive that lives under a Curse? Clouds of blood and wrath hang over the head of a wicked man; he is heir to all the plagues that are written in the book

of

of God; all Gods curſes are the Sinners portion, and if he dies in his ſinnes, he is ſure to have the portion paid him. Woe to the Wicked; everie bit of Bread he eateth he hath it with a curſe, like poyſoned Bread given to a Dogge; everie drop of VVine he drinks, he ſwallowes down a curſe with it. Woe to the Wicked, there is a curſe in his Cup, there is a curſe on his Table, God hath ſaid, VVoe to him.

We read of *Belſhazar*, *Dan.* 5. 4. 5, that *when he taſted the wine; he commanded to bring the gold and ſilver taken out of the Temple; then they brought the gold and ſilver veſſels, and drank wine, and prayſed the gods of gold and ſilver.* He was very jovial, but in the midſt of his cups and jollity, woe to the VVicked; for in the ſame hour there came forth the fingers of a Mans hand, ann wrote over againſt the Candleſtick on the VVall a Curſe and VVoe. Woe to the Wicked; let a ſinner live till he be a hundred years old, yet ſtill he is accurſed, *Eſay* 23. 20. *Though a ſinner live a hundred years old, yet ſhall he dye accurſed; his grey haire have a curſe upon them.*

Secondly, It ſhall be ill with the Wicked at the hour of death, and that in two reſpects; Death puts an end to all his comforts, aud Death is a beginning of all his miſeries.

Firſt, Death puts an end to a Sinners comforts. There ſhall be no more indulging of the Flesh, and pampering of it; no more cups of VVine, and no more Muſick to be ſeen or heard then. In *Revel.* 18. 14. & 22. *The things that thy Soul luſteth after is departed from thee; the voyce of the Harpers, Muſicians and Trumpeters*

Trumpeters shall be no more at all in thee; it is spoken of the destruction of *Rome*. Thus may it be said of a wicked man at death, All joy and pleasure is now departed from thee; no more shalt thou hear the voyce of the Harp; Organ or Trumpet: no more shall the Sinner be cloathed in Scarlet robes, or adorned with sparkling Diamonds; Now all oyle and balsome, all joy and gladness, at death shall cease and depart from the Sinner.

Secondly, As Death puts a period to a Sinners mirth, so it layes a foundation for all his sorrowes. Usually before Death doth close the eye of the Sinners body, the eye of his Conscience is first opened.

Every sinne at the hour of death stands with a drawn sword in his hand; Those sinnes that delighted the Sinner formerly, now terrifie and affright him. All his joy and mirth is turned into sadnesse.

As sometimes you have seen Sugar lying in a damp place, dissolve and turn to Water: Thus all the sugarly Joyes of Wicked men at the hour of death turn to VVater, even the VVater of Tears and Sorrow.

Thirdly, It shall be ill with a Wicked man at the day of Judgement, when he is cited before Gods Tribunal, when he shall leave courting his VVickednesse, and stand at Gods Barr to answer for it.

You read of *Felix*, that when he heard *Paul* speak of Judgement, *Felix* trembled. *Iosephus* observed that *Felix* was a wicked man; and she that then lived with him, her name was *Drusilla*, whom he had enticed

ticed away from her Husband, and lived in ſinne with her; Now when *Felix* heard *Paul* ſpeak of Judgement, he trembled, his Conſcience that check'd him for his ſinne.

Now, if *Felix* trembled at the hearing of Judgement, what will *Sinners* do when the day of Judgement ſhall come, when all mens ſecret ſins ſhall be made manifeſt, when all their midnight wickedneſſe ſhall be written upon their Foreheads as with the point of a Diamond?

At the day of Judgement, my Beloved, there will be two things:

First, The Legal Tryal.

Secondly, The *Sentence*.

First, The Legal Tryal. God will call forth *Sinners* by Name, and ſay, *Stand* forth, Hear thy Charge, Let me ſee what thou canſt anſwer to to it? VVhat canſt thou ſay for all thy *Sabboth*-breaking? for all thy Drunkenneſſe and Perjury? for all thy Revenge and Malice? for all thy perſecuting of my Members? what canſt thou ſay for all theſe? Guilty or not guilty? Thou Wretch dareſt not ſay Not Guilty; for have not I been an eye witneſſe of all thy Wickedneſſe? do not the Books agree, the Book of thy Conſcience, and the Book of my Omniſciency? and canſt thou plead Not guilty? Here the *Sinner* will be amazed with horrour, and run into deſperation.

Secondly,

Secondly, After this legal Tryal follows the Sentence, *Ite Maledicti*, Go ye curſed; What go from the preſence of Chriſt, in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and go from Chriſt with a curſe! That word *depart*, ſaid Saint *Chriſoſtome*, is worſe than the torments themſelves.

And Beloved, remember this ye that go on in a ſinne, when once the Sentence is paſt, it can never be reverſed; This is the moſt Supreme Court of Judicature, from whence there is no Appeal. Here on Earth men can remove their Cauſe from one Court to another, from the Common law to the Chancery; but if once the Sentence be paſt at this Judgement bar, there is no removing your Cauſe. This is the higheſt Court, there is no appealing any where elſe. And thus you ſee it is ill with the Wicked at the day of Judgement.

Fourthly, It ſhall be ill with the Wicked after the day of Judgment. Oh! then there is but one way, and they would be glad if they might not go that way; But they muſt go that way even to priſon, yea to hell, *Luke* 16. 23, 24. *In Hell he lift up his eyes.* Hell is the very center of Miſery, the ſpirit of torments ſtilled out.

The Scripture tells us in Hell there are three things:

First, Darkneſſe.

Secondly, Fire.

Thirdly, Chaines.

First, Hell is called a place of Darkneſſe. In *Iude* Verſe 13. *To them is reſerved the blackneſſe of darkneſs for ever.* Darkneſſe you know is the moſt uncomfortable thing in the world: A man that goes in the dark trembles every ſtep that he goes; Hell is a black Region; There is nothing but darkneſſe of darkneſſe; It muſt needs be a dark place, where there ſhall be a ſeparation from the light of Gods preſence. Indeed *Auſtin* thinks, that there ſhall be ſome little ſulphureous light: But ſuppoſe there be; that light ſhall onely ſerve the damned to behold the tragedie of their own miſerie, to ſee themſelves tormented.

Secondly, In Hell there is Fire; it is called a burning Lake, *Revel.* 20. 15. *Whoſoever was not found written in the book of Life, was caſt into the lake of fire.* You know the Fire is the moſt torturing Element; it makes the moſt dreadfull impreſſion upon the Fleſh. Why Hell is a place of Fire; it is diſputed among ſome of the learned what kind of fire it is; I wiſh we may never feel what kind of fire it is.

Auſtin, Peter Lumbard, and others affirm, That it is a material Fire, but far hotter than any culinarie fire; the fire on your hearths is but painted fire compared to this. But I rather think, the fire of the damned is partly material, and partly ſpiritual. Partly material, to work upon the body; and partly ſpiritual; which is the wrath of God to torment the Soul: This is that Lake of burning fire; Oh! who knows the power of Gods anger? who can dwell with theſe burnings? It is intolerable to hear theſe ſcorchings, and it is impoſſible for the damned to eſcape them.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, In Hell there are Chains of darkneſſe; ſee the 6th. Verſe of the Epiſtle of *Iude*, *Thoſe ſinners that would not be bound by any law of God, ſhall have chains of darkneſs to bind them.* But what is the meaning of this phraſe, *chains of darkneſs*?

I ſuppoſe it may be this, to intimate to us; That the Wicked in Hell ſhall not have power to walk up and down; which perhaps would be a little eaſe to them, though a very little; yea but they ſhall not have ſo much as that little eaſe, but ſhall be chained, tyed, and ſtaked faſt with chains of darkneſs, that they ſhall not ſtirre; and this is very terrible.

Suppoſe a man did alvvayes lye upon a dovvn-bed, if he might not ſtirre off the place, it vvould be very painfull to him, though on a bed of dovvn; Hovv terrible then will it be to the damned, that muſt lie under the ſcorchings of Gods fury, chained dovvn, and not be able to move? And thus ſhall it be to the Wicked.

And to adde to the torments of Hell, there are two things vvhich shevv it shall be ill vvith the vvicked, let them dye when they vvill.

Firſt, There is the Worme.

Secondly, There is the Serpent.

Firſt, There is the Worme to torture the Spirit, and this is no other but the worme of Conſcience, *Mar.* 9.44. *VVhere their worm never dyes*; Hovv dreadfull will it be to have this Worme gnawing continually! *Melanchon* called it a hellish fury. Conſcience will

be juſt as if a worm full of poyſon were gnawing the heart of a man; Thoſe ſinners that would never hear the voice of Conſcience, ſhall for ever feel the worme of Conſcience.

Secondly, There is the Serpent, and that the Devil called the old Serpent, *Revel. 4.* As there is the biting of the Worme, ſo there is the ſtinging of the Serpent. The damned in Hell ſhall be forced to behold the Devil, that damned Monſter. I remember what *Anſelme* ſaith, *I had rather endure all the torments of this life, than ſee the Devil with bodily eyes*; But this ſight of the Devil the Wicked ſhall ſee whether they will or no; and not onely ſee, but ſhall feel the ſtingings of this old Serpent.

Sathan is full of rage againſt Mankind, and he will ſhew no mercy; as he puts forth all his ſubtilty in tempting men, ſo he puts forth all his cruelty in tormenting men.

And this is not all; there are two things more that aggravate the torments of hell, to ſhew that it ſhall be ill with the wicked.

Firſt, Theſe agonies, theſe hell-convulſions ſhall be for ever, *Revel.* 14. 11. *The ſmoak of their torment aſcended for ever and ever, and they ſhall have no reſt day nor night.* Thus is it in Hell; they would die, but they cannot; *mors ſine morte*, the wicked ſhall be alwayes dying, yet never dead; alwayes conſuming, yet never conſumed; *the ſmoak of their furnace aſcends for ever and ever.*

Oh! who can endure thus to be for ever on the wrack; this word *Ever* breaks the heart of the wicked;

ed, they now think a Sabbath long, and a Sermon long; and a prayer long; they cry out, When will theſe be over! Oh! how long then will it be to lie in Hell torments for ever and ever? After the wicked have lain three millions of years, their torments will be as far from ending as they were the firſt hour they came there.

Secondly, The damned in Hell ſhall have none to pity them. It is ſome comfrt and eaſe to have friends pity us when we are on our ſick beds, or under any affliction: but the damned ſhall have none to pity them; Mercy will not pity them; that is turned to fury; Chriſt will not pity them, he is no more an Advocate for them; Angels will dot pity them, for they rejoyce to ſee the vengeance, they inſult and glory to ſee the juſtice of God executed upon them. Oh! how ſad is it to lie in the ſcalding furnace of Gods wrath, and to have none to pity us? Gods bowels will be locked up, and his heart will be hardened to damned ſinners; then they ſhall call and God will laugh at them, *Prov.* 1. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity.* Hear this all you that go on in ſin, *it will be ill with the wicked*; O therefore *turn from your ſins, leaſt God tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver, or help you.*

For the application of this point.

Firſt, What a confounding word is this to all the Wicked, that go on deſperately in ſinne? that adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt? Never was there ſuch an inundation of wickedneſſe, as there is now adayes: Men ſinne, as if they would ſinne to ſpight God; as if they would dare Heaven to puniſh them:

men ſinne ſo greedily, as if they were afraid Hell gate would be shut up ere they could get thither. How many are there that ſinne manfully? that go to Hell ſtoutly in their wickedneſs? as *Seneca* ſpeaks. Theſe are in a ſad condition. Remember what the text ſaith, *VVo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with them*; ill with them in life, in death, and after death. A wicked man lives curſed, and dyes damned. Sinners are Gods ſtanding mark that he shoots at, and he never miſſeth the mark. You know what the Scripture ſayth, *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

It is a ſaying of *Latimer*, that is very ſad fare, where weeping is the firſt courſe, and gnaſhing of teeth is the ſecond.

But whence may this gnashing of the teeth come?

Firſt, It ariſeth from the extremitie of the torments that the damned ſuffer; this makes them gnash their teeth with horrour, they are not able to bear it, and yet they know not how to avoid it.

Secondly, The Wicked gnash their teeth out of envy, to think that the godly are happy and bleſſed; thoſe that they reproached, hated and perſecuted, they are happy in glory, and they themſelves are thrown down into Hell; this cuts them to the heart to think of it, and makes them gnash their teeth, *Luke* 10. *There ſhall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you ſhall ſee* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob *in the Kingdom of God, and you your ſelves thruſt out.* And this is the firſt uſe shewing the miſerie of a wicked man; if all the Curſes in the Bible will make him miſerable, he shall be miſerable. God will make his Arrows drunk with his blood.

Secondly,

Secondly, take heed that none of you are here found in the number of the Wicked; take heed of being of this black Regiment; beware of the Devils colours; fight not under his Banner; it shall be ill vvith the Wicked; the Sinner and the Furnace shall never be parted.

In a word, I beseech you take heed of those sinnes that bring to Hell fire: There are, said Saint *Bernard*, fiery sinnes that bring men to Hell fire. What are these fiery sinnes? Why they are the fire of Malice, the fire of Passion, the fire of Lust, the fire of Concupiscence, and the fire of Revenge: these fiery sins bring men to fiery plagues, to Hell fire. When you are tempted to any sinne, think with your selves, How can I bear the lying in the fiercenes of the Wine-press of Gods wrath for ever!

I have read a story of a Virgin, that being tempted by a young man to commit folly, sayes she to him, If you will grant me but one request, I will do what you desire. What is that? said he. Why, do but hold your Finger one hour in this burning Candle. No, he would not do that: said she to him, Will not you for my sake hold your Finger one hour in the Candle, and would you have me lay my Soul burning in Hell for ever, for the satisfying of your Lust? And thus she refuted that temptation.

Why doth Sathan tempt you to Wickednesse? hold up this Text against the Devil, as a shield to quench his fiery darts; Sathan, it will go ill with the wicked; If I embrace thy temptation, I must be under thy tormenting for ever.

O therefore learn to be Righteous: it ſhall be well with the Righteous; take heed of living and dying in ſinne: It ſhall be ill with the VVicked; the God of Heaven hath ſaid it.

I will conclude all with a ſaying of *Auſtine*; ſayes he, *When a man hath been vertuous, the labour is gone, and the joy remains: when a man hath been wicked, the pleaſure is gone, and the ſting remaineth.*

SER-

SERMON V.

Dr Jacomb:

JOHN 8. 29.

And he that ſent me, is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do alwayes thoſe things that pleaſe him.

THeſe are the words of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are ſpoken by himſelf, and they are ſpoken of himſelf; though yet in a ſober and modeſt ſence they are applicable to all his members: That which Chriſt here affirms, is that

that the preſence of God was alwayes with him; and this is firſt propounded, *He that ſent me is with me*; and then it is amplified, *and the father hath not left me alone*: and then thirdly the reaſon of this is annexed, *for I alwayes do thoſe things that pleaſe him.*

I ſhall ſpeak but very little of the words as they do refer to Chriſt; he tels us where his Father was with him; he did not leave him alone in all the troubles and difficulties that he met withal in the finiſhing the great work of mans redemption; ſtill God was with him: It is true, there was a time when Chriſt was without the ſenſible manifeſtation of his Fathers preſence, when he cryed out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Why but yet even then in truth and in reality his Father did not leave him; for though he had not the evidences of his Fathers preſence, yet he had the influences of his fathers preſence. It would take up much time to ſhew you how in all particulars the Father was preſent with Chriſt: I will onely ſpeak this one word, and inſtance in this one thing; Gods aſſiſting preſence was alwayes with him, both in his active, and alſo in his paſſive obedience; and indeed he had that work to do, and thoſe miſeries to ſuffer, that if God had left him, if he had not been mightily aſſiſted by the Divine Nature, Chriſt as meer man could neither have done, nor have ſuffered what he did; but the Father was with him, and to ſupport him; *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold.* You ſhall find that Chriſt did act faith upon this; in *Iſa.* 50. 7. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded.* Ver. 9. *The Lord will help me.* So to the ſame effect is

Pſal.

Pſal. 16. 9. And you ſhall find this made good to him in Scriptures, in his greateſt neceſſities,

Take a Double Inſtance.

In the firſt place, After he had been engaged in that Combat with Satan, you read of in *Matth.* 4. the ſtrongeſt Combat or Duel that ever was fought; wherein you have the Prince of Peace and the prince of darkneſſe; the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the roaring Lion that ſeeks how to devour; both of them putting forth their utmoſt ſtrength, and indeavouring to overcome each the other: Now I ſay in this Combat the Father did not leave Chriſt, but he helps him; for he ſends an Angel for to miniſter unto him, *Matth.* 4. 11.

So in Chriſts bitter Agony in the Garden, juſt before his bitter paſſion and death upon the Croſſe, the Father did not leave him alone, for he ſent an Angel unto him to ſtrengthen him, *Mat.* 22. 43. and ſo in ſeveral other places, and in ſeveral other things I might inſtance; but I ſhall paſſe this by. I but now, Why did the Father thus ſtand by Chriſt? he gives you the reaſon of it in the Text, becauſe he alwayes did the things that pleaſed him: This I ſhall open in a double reſpect.

Firſt, Chriſts undertaking of the work of our Redemption, it was very well pleaſing unto his Father, that poor loſt undone ſinners ſhould be brought back again unto God, and reſtored unto his love and favour: I ſay, the Father was infinitely well pleaſed with Chriſt in this undertaking, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *The pleaſure of the Lord*

Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; the pleaſure of the Lord, that is the work of our redemption; wherein God the Farher took great pleaſure or delight; therefore when Chriſt was publickly in the eye of the world to enter upon this great work, the Father ſends him out with this witneſſe, *This is my beloved Son in whom, I am well pleaſed.* He ſpeaks not of his well pleaſing only to his perſon, but alſo to his well pleaſing as unto his undertaking.

Secondly, As the work it ſelf was pleaſing unto God, ſo Chriſts managing of this work was all along pleaſing unto his Father: and that doth appear in this, that Chriſt in all things kept to his Fathers Commiſſion, and to his Fathers Command: I ſay in all things he kept to his Fathers Commiſſion; he did nothing here upon Earth, but what was within the compaſſe of his Commiſſion; for ſaith he in the verſe before the Text, *I do nothing of my ſelf, but as my Father bids me.* So alſo he acted in conformitie to his Fathers will; that was the rule and ſquare by which Chriſt ordered all his actions; his eyes was ſtill upon his Fathers will; whatever he willed him to do, that he did; whatever he willed him to ſuffer, rhat he ſuffered; and thus he alwayes did the things that were pleaſing to his Father; but I do not intend further upon the words in this reference; For my deſigne is to bring down the words unto our ſelves, to thoſe that are the members of Chriſt; for there is the ſame diſpoſition of heart in all Believers to pleaſe God: In all things to pleaſe God: this was the frame and temper and carriage of Chriſt: ſo it is the frame and temper of every true Believer; and

this is a part of our likeneſſe unto Chriſt; as you know there is a bleſſed reſemblance and ſimilitude between Chriſt and his members; they have the ſame ſpirit that Chriſt had, onely in a different proportion; for he had it without meaſure; they have the ſame grace as Chriſt had for ſubſtance, though not for degree; of his fulneſs we all have received grace for grace; that is, as many interpret it, grace anſwerable unto grace: As the print in the wax anſwers to the print in the Seal; and as face anſwers to face; ſo grace in believers anſwers unto that grace that was in Chriſt: They are to ſhew forth the vertues of Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Now this was the grace and vertue and holineſſe of Chriſt, that he alwayes did the things that pleaſed his Father.* Why this is in all believers, onely with this difference; it was actual performance in the one, it is but indeavour in the other; it was perfect in the one; it is ſincere, but imperfect in the other.

Chriſt alwayes did the things that pleaſed God; a believer endeavours alwayes to do the things that pleaſe God; he doth not alwayes do ſo; witneſs *David* in the Caſe of his uncleanneſs, when he diſpleaſed the Lord, as it is in 2 *Sam.* 11.

The Obſervation I intend to ſpeak to, ſhall be this:

They that pleaſe God; and endeavour alwayes to do the things that pleaſe God, ſuch God will be with; ſuch the Father will not leave alone; eſpecially in times of ſuffering and trouble; for I will bring it to that Caſe.

Indeed

Indeed God will not leave ſuch at any time; for that promiſe is exceeding full, *Heb.* 13. 5. *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* I do not know any one promiſe in all the Bible, that is expreſt with ſuch an Emphaſis as that promiſe is; ſuch a multiplication of negatives in the Original. But eſpecially God will not leave ſuch in an afflicted and ſuffering condition.

In the proſecuting of this I will ſpeak to four things:

Firſt, I will ſhew you when a man may be ſaid to do the things that pleaſe God. 2. I will confirm the truth of the Doctrine. 3. I will ſhew you in what reſpects God will be with them that deſire to pleaſe him, in a ſuffering condition. 4. I will give you the grounds and reaſons of it; and then I ſhall come to an Application.

For the firſt, We pleaſe God in what we do, when we act, 1. In a ſuitableneſſe to Gods nature: And 2. In ſubjection to Gods Law: For pleaſing of God lies in theſe two things. As that pleaſes a man which is ſuitable to his diſpoſition, and is correſpondent with his Command: We do the things that pleaſe God, when we do that which God doth; and when we do that which God commands: When we hate ſin, as God hates ſin; when we are holy, as God is holy. You ſhall find it in *Col.* 1. 10. *That you may walk worthy of God, unto all well-pleaſing.* Obſerve, This walking worthy of God, is walking ſuitably, or walking anſwerably to God. *Matth.* 3. 8. *Bring forth*

fruit

fruit worthy of repentance; or bring forth fruit anſwerable to repentance; ſo to walke worthy of God, is to walk ſuitable to God, to his nature: Now then obſerve what follows, that you might walk worthy of God to all well pleaſing; then we pleaſe God, when we walk ſuitably unto God: So alſo when we act in a bleſſed conformity to God, to his Law; for nothing can pleaſe the good God, but what is good: Now the Law being the meaſure and ſtandard of all goodneſſe, nothing can be good, but what bears conformitie to this Law, which is the will of God. God is well pleaſed when his will is obſerved: As you know, you that are Maſters, your ſervants pleaſe you when they doe your will. That inference of the Apoſtle for this is very appoſite, *Rom.* 8. 8. *So then, they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* VVhat is this ſame inference grounded upon? becauſe the carnal mind is enmitie againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can; ſo that they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God. Why? Becauſe there is that principle in them, as carries out a real enmitie to the Law and Will of God; it is as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, They will not be ſubject to Gods will, not obedient to Gods commands; there is a principle of enmitie in them againſt theſe things, and ſo cannot pleaſe God: God is pleaſed when his will is fulfilled, and his commands obſerved; to pleaſe God, is in all things ſo to act, that whatever we do, we may expreſſe a likeneſſe to Gods nature, and a bleſſed ſubjection to Gods revealed will, and this is the firſt thing.

A ſecond thing is the proof of the Doctrine; they that thus pleaſe God, he will be with them, he will not leave them alone; eſpecially in an hour of trial: For my brethren, aſſure your ſelves of this, that which the Father did for Chriſt, he will do for all his members; it is true, Chriſts ſufferings, being greater than ours poſſibly can be, and ſo his relation to God being higher than ours is; he a Son by eternal Generation, we onely by Adoption; he had the preſence of God in a more glorions manner then we can expect; but yet in our Sphere according to the meaſure of our trial, and according to our capacity, we ſhall as really have the preſence of God with us, as Chriſt had with him; that as we are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, ſo we alſo ſhall be partakers of Chriſts ſupport; He that will be preſent with believers in heaven, as he is with Chriſt, he will be preſent with believers here on earth, as he was with Chriſt in all his ſorrows and ſufferings.

Now for the confirming of this comfortable truth, I need not ſpeak much: Many promiſes you have in Scripture for it, and whatever God hath promiſed, he will certainly make good: Turn to that one promiſe inſtead of many, *Iſa.* 43. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the water, I will be with thee; through the rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee; when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee.* And you ſhall find too that the Saints have experienced it in all ages, God hath made it good.

Jacob

Jacob was a man that met with many ſharp trials, God execrciſed him with many troubles; you ſhall find that when he was going to *Padan Aram*, and was in a very afflicted condition, *Gen.* 28. 15. God comes unto him, and ſaith, *Behold, I am with thee, Gen.* 31. 5. His father frowned upon him, but the God of his fathers helped him: *Joſeph*, *Gen.* 29. 20. His maſter took him, put him into priſon, a place where the Kings priſoners were bound; he was in the priſon, but the Lord was with *Joſeph*. The Prophet *Jeremy* was thrown into a dungeon, but the Scripture ſaith, *God was with him*. The three Children were thrown into the Furnace of fire, but there was a fourth with them, and that was the Son of God, *Dan.* 3. 25. *Paul* when he was brought to his trial, all men forſook him, but God ſtood by him, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. So the Chriſtians in all their ſharp ſufferings, 2 *Cor.* 4. 9. they were perſecuted, but not forſaken; perſecuted by men, but not forſaken by God. God hath abundantly made out this, and doth ſo ſtill, that he will never leave thoſe alone in a time of ſuffering, who deſire unfeignedly in all things to pleaſe God.

Now the third thing is to ſhew you in what reſpects God is with ſuch: why this preſence of God is an active preſence: God is not meerly with his people, but he is with them in an active way: for this is a certain truth, God is working when the Saints are ſuffering, I will open this in ſeveral particulars.

Firſt, God is with ſuch in his teaching preſence. Gods correction, and Gods inſtruction they uſually go together; and where there is the chaſtenings of Gods hand, there is alſo the teaching of Gods Spirit, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſtneſt, and whom thou teacheſt.* Chriſt, though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that he ſuffered: God teacheth his upright ones many leſſons in a time of adverſity, which they never learned in a time of proſperity. For we are like idle boyes, or bad Schollers, that learn beſt when the rod is over us: In a proſperous condition God ſpeaks to us, and we mind him not, *Jeremy* 2. 21. *I ſpoke to thee in thy proſperity, but thou wouldeſt not hear:* and this hath been thy manner from thy youth upwards: In proſperity God ſpeaks once and twice, as *Job* ſpeaks, but we will not hear; but in the time of adverſity God opens the ears: *Judges* 8. 16. As *Guidean* taught the men of *Succoth* with thornes and briars: ſo doth God teach his people by affliction: and oh the many bleſſed truths that they learn, when they are under the rod, when they want liberty! Oh what a mercy is it to have liberty then, when they have not Ordinances as before! what a mercy is it to have Ordinances then! Oh what an evil thing is it then for them, that they have departed from God! God teaches them theſe things then: ſin is never ſo bitter, mercy is never ſo ſweet, as in a time of ſuffering: Oh how vain and empty is the creature then! Oh how ſweet is communion with God

God then! I ſay ſuch things as theſe God teaches then.

Secondly, God is with ſuch in his guiding preſence, *Pſalm.* 73. 24. *Thou wilt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me unto glory.* When *Iſrael* was in the Wilderneſs, then they had the cloud to guide them. It is a bleſſed thing to live under the conduct and direction of the wiſe God: we never have ſo much of this as in an hour of travel: indeed the people of God never flie ſo much to God for direction as at ſuch a time: as *Saul*, when he was in diſtreſs, then he calls for the Ephod, and thus it is with us under affliction, then we look to God.

Thirdly, God is with them in his preſerving and hiding preſence: God is the Saints hiding place, their Shield, their Buckler, their Rock, their Defence: the Scripture-expreſſions are many to hold out Gods protection as to his people: God hath a conſtant care over them to preſerve them and ſave them; oh but eſpecially in a time of trouble: as the Mariner is never ſo careful of the ſhip as under a ſtorm; and God is never ſo careful of his Church and people as under affliction. *Jeremy* is in the Dungeon, now God ſaves him: *Daniel* is in the Den, now God ſaves him: The three Children in the Fire, now God ſaves them: *Peter* is in priſon, now God ſaves him: The Mother never tends the Child ſo carefully, as when the child is ſick; and Providence is never

ſo tender to the people of God, as under a ſuffering condition.

Fourthly, God is with them in his comforting preſence: 2 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation:* and uſually we have moſt of conſolation from God, when we have moſt of tribulation from without: as our ſufferings do abound, ſo our conſolation doth abound much more: The Child that is beaten when it is well, is cheriſhed when it is ill: when perſons are ſick, then you give them cordials: God gives the beſt of comforts in the worſt of times: when the burden is heavy upon the back, then the peace of conſcience is great within: the worſe it is without, the better it is within: when men diſcover moſt of anger, then God diſcovers moſt of love.

Fifthly, God is with ſuch in his ſtrengthning preſence, to enable them, and to ſupport them to undergo whatever he is pleaſed to call them unto: this is the way of our good and gracious God, he alwayes gives out ſtrength as he layes on affliction: he never leaves his Children alone in this reſpect: he will be with them to ſupport them: though it may be not to deliver, yet he will certainly be with them to ſupport; the rod and the ſtaff they go together, *Pſal.* 23. 4. the afflicting rod, and the ſupporting ſtaff: when one hand is upon the Saint to afflict, then the other hand is underneath the Saint to ſupport: *Iſay* 41. 10. *I will uphold thee, I will ſtrengthen thee; fear not, I will help thee,*

yea,

yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs. This *David* found, *I cryed unto the Lord in my diſtreſs, he anſwered me, and ſtrengthned me in my inward man, Pſal.* 138. 3. Oh when men afflict, God ſupports: when men put the Children of God into deep waters, then God takes them by the chin, and holds them up, that they ſhall not ſink and be drowned.

Sixthly, God is with them in his ſympathizing preſence: Oh he hath a tender ſence of all the ſorrows and calamities of his people! Oh it grieves him when they are grieved! they that touch them, tough the apple of his eye: in all their afflictions he is afflicted, *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?* Every blow that is given to them, God bears a part of it himſelf: as they are ſenſible of Gods diſhonour, ſo God is ſenſible of their ſufferings; it pains him to the heart to ſee his Children wronged and abuſed by a malicious world.

Seventhly, He is with them by his ſanctifying preſence: all their troubles are to do them good, and to make them good: and therefore the furnace it is but to refine them from their droſs: the pruning hook of affliction it is but to cut off their luxuriant branches: God takes the ſharp knife into his hand and lances them, but it is only to fetch out their corruption: by this ſhall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin.

Eighthly, God is with them by his quickning preſence, to make their Prayers more fervent, to make their requeſts to the Throne of Grace more importunate. The children of God cry moſt to him when they ſuffer moſt from men, and their prayers are beſt when their condition is worſt: Prayer ſhortens affliction, and affliction heightens Prayer: God is with them to hear their prayers. Oh the Prayer of the afflicted that comes up to Heaven! God hears the ſighs and groans of his oppreſſed ones, their tears pierce the Heavens, they call upon God in time of trouble, and pour out their ſorrows before the Lord, and he doth hear them.

Ninethly, God is with them by his raiſing preſence to raiſe up their hearts higher, to elevate their ſouls, and bring them more near to himſelf. Gods people when they meet with troubles in the world, oh nothing ſo ſweet unto them as the enjoyment of God: then no life ſo ſweet unto them as the life of faith; then they relliſh a ſweetneſs in the promiſe: then every ſmile of God, oh how welcome is it! then all the affections of their ſouls center in God, and run to God: as in winter time all the ſap of the tree runs to the root: in ſummer time it ſpreads it ſelf in the body, but in the winter goes to the root: when a man is ſick, all the blood goes to the heart: ſo in a ſuffering condition all the affections of the ſoul go to God.

But now what are the Reaſons why God will not leave his people that thus deſire to pleaſe him?

Why,

Why, God loves them, therefore he will not leave them; perſons we love we cannot leave: eſpecially when they are in a diſtreſſed condition; and as God hath ſet his love upon them, ſo they have ſet their love upon God, they love God. *Pſal.* 91. 15. you have there an expreſſion, *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him: he ſhall call upon me, and I will anſwer him, I will be with him in trouble.* God is a God of bowels, of great pity and compaſſion, and therefore he will not leave his people in a time of diſtreſs: you know bowels how they ſtand in you towards them that are in miſery; it goes to the heart of a merciful man to leave a perſon in miſery: Oh how great are the bowels and compaſſions of God! *Is Ephraim my ſon, is a he pleaſant childe? Oh my bowels are turned within me, I will have mercy on him.*

2. Such as pleaſe God ſhall have his preſence under ſuffering, becauſe now they need God moſt: if God will not leave his people as to temporal ſupplies, becauſe they need ſuch and ſuch things; they need meat, and they need cloathing: ſurely much more God will not leave his children as to ſpiritual ſupplies, under times of diſtreſs, becauſe then they need God. Oh what can a Believer do? or what can a Believer ſuffer when God leaves him; his ſtrength is in God: his ſupport is in God: his comfort is in God: his all is in God, and therefore if God now leave him, what will become of him? he needs God at all times, but never ſo much as when his condition is dark and troubled.

what was *Sampſon*, that man of ſo great ſtrength, when his hair was gone? and what is a Believer when his God his gone?

3. God loves to ſee his people chearful in a time of ſuffering, and therefore he is with them; he loves not that they ſhould walk dejectly. When God is preſent, *Paul* and *Silas* can ſing in priſon: the Apoſtles can rejoyce, that God honours them to be reproached for him. When God is preſent, the people of God are not only chearful under tribulation, but can glory: their croſs is their crown: but if God be withdrawn, what can there be? drooping hearts, and penſive ſorrows.

4. God will not leave them, becauſe they will not leave God: God will not leave them, becauſe they ſuffer for his ſake: were they not tender of Gods glory, and careful to pleaſe him, they might be free from ſuffering as well as others; but it is for Gods ſake they ſuffer; *For thy ſake we are killed like ſheep all the day long.*

Laſtly, It is thus, becauſe God will make it appear to all the world, that he puts a difference between them that deſire to pleaſe him, and other men: God hath a value for ſuch: Do but ſee how *Moſes* argues the caſe with God, *Exod.*33.13. and ſo on, where he comes to God with a great requeſt, that God ſhould ſhew him his way that he might know it: why ſaith God to him, *My preſence ſhall go with thee.* *Moſes* ſaid unto him, It is well thou art pleaſed to promiſe ſo great a mercy; *If thy preſence go*

not

not with me, carry us not hence: for wherein ſhall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight? Is it not in this, that thou goeſt with us? Obſerve, *Moſes* pleads with God, how his favour, and love, and mercy ſhould be with them, unleſs he were preſent with them: and ſo God, he walks with his people in trouble; for how ſhould the world ſee God regarded them, and did favour them, unleſs he manifeſted his preſence unto them in a time of trouble and affliction?

The end of the ſixth Sermon.

SER-

SERMON VI

Rev. 2. 5. Mr Case:

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

CHrist here prescribes pretious physick for the healing of this languishing Church of *Ephesus*: 'tis compounded of a threefold ingredient.

1. Self-reflection, *Remember from*, &c.

2. Holy contrition and humiliation before the Lord, *Repent*.

3. Thorough Reformation, *Do thy first works*.

I left the last time upon the second of these, namely, *Repentance*; and that which I did upon this part of Christs advice was, not so much to open to you the nature of Repentance (which is not so proper for this place) as to give in a cata-

catalogue or list of such special sins, as Christ doth expect that all his people in these three Nations should lay to heart, and repent of before the Lord, I gave you in a list eleven special sins that we should repent of, and humble our selves for before the Lord. As

1. *Omission of duty*, Prayer, reading the Word, Meditation, &c. any thing will be for excuse to say by duties, and we are secretly glad of an excuse.

2. *Remisness in duty.* In things of the world we are all in all, and all in every part; a man cannot thrust another thought into us; but in prayer, how many things are we doing?

3. *Hypocrise.* How unlike are we at home to what abroad? and in company to what in secret?

4. *Pride*: In apparel, houses, parts, blood, birthright, yea of grace it self, of humility, Ministers, Ordinances, &c.

5. *Covetousness.* Never did covetousness invade the professing party as now: The more goods men get, the less good they do.

6. *Sensuality.* Voluptuousness, wantonness: Christians let themselves loose to the Creature; lay out their affections on things below, as if part in the Serpents curse as well as their own.

7. *Animosities* and divisions among Christians: many have been active to kindle, but few to quench divisions.

8. *Uncharitable censuring one another.*

9. *Formality in duty.* Witness 1. Unprepared coming. 2. Unsutableness of spirit to: And 3. Want of reflection after duty, how we have sped, what we have got; Sabbath, Sacraments, comes

comes and goes, Monday morning finds us the ſame as before.

10. *Miſ-pent Sabbaths.* Some prophane, others idle away the Sabbath, &c.

11. *Neglect of our Bibles* in our families and cloſets. I pray God it forego not ſome great evil coming upon you, as before the maſſacre in *Germany* it was obſerved, &c. I proceed.

12. The want of *mutual forbearance* among Chriſtians. Alas Chriſtians know not how to bear one with another in the leaſt kind of meaſure. Oh the ſhort-ſpiritedneſs among Chriſtians, they cannot bear one anothers burdens, they cannot bear with one another. 'Tis very ſad, that we that ſtand in need of ſo much forbearance, ſhould expreſs ſo little to our Brother: 'Tis an Argument *we know not of what ſpirit we are of* (as Chriſt told his Diſciples.) Oh! how unlike to that God whom we profeſs to be our God? He is long-ſuffering, patient, full of goodneſs, gentleneſs, mercy, &c. we can bear nothing, we can ſuffer nothing one from another.

13. Our great *murmuring againſt Reformation and Reformers* (God hath heard the voice of our murmuring, *Exod.* 16.) As if there had been nothing that would have undone us but Reformation: and truly God ſeems to ſpeak ſuch a word as that was, *Numb.* 7. 5. in diſpleaſure and anger, *I will make your murmurings to ceaſe*: I will take

take away the cauſe of your murmuring: I would have reformed you, and you would not be reformed: As Chriſt to *Jeruſalem*, *I would, but you would not*, *Mat.* 23. the time may come when we would, and God will not: when we ſhall cry, *Other Lords have had dominion over us*, &c. *Iſa.* 26. 13. but thou Lord, ſet up thou thy government: rule thou over us: and God may ſay, *No*, 'tis too late, *I would have healed you, and you would not be healed.*

14. The great *neglect of the care of our Families.* Truly 'tis not the leaſt ſin that threatens the removeal of our Candleſtick. How generally have the duties of Religion been let fall in our families, reading the Word, ſinging Pſalms, &c. time was, when one could not have come through the ſtreets in *London* on an evening in the *week-day*, but we might hear the praiſes of God, ſinging of Pſalms; now it's a ſtranger in the City, even upon the *Lords own day*. Oh! how have Governors of Families caſt off the care of the ſouls that God hath committed to them? How careleſs are they of the ſouls of their *yoak-fellows* that lie in their boſoms, of their *children*, the fruit of their loins, *Maſters* of their *ſervants*, *&c!* And in the mean time are ready to ſtand up and juſtifie themſelves with the boldneſs of *Cain*, to ſay to God, *am I my brothers keeper?* Am I the keeper of my yoak-fellows, children, ſervants ſouls? Yes, thou art the keeper, *&c.* God hath put them into thy truſt, and if they periſh through thy fault, *they may die in their ſins*, but *their blood ſhall be required at thy hand.* God will ſay to thee as he did to *Cain*, *Thy brothers blood cryeth in my ear.*

15. Our

15. Our *indifferences as to matter of faith and doctrine*: That we have not been more zealous for the Truth of Christ, that great trust and *depositum* which hath been committed to us: We have accounted it no matter of what opinion or judgement men be in these latter times. 'Tis an universaying, *No matter what judgement men be of, so they be Saints*: as if *truth in the judgement* did not go to the making up of a Saint, as well as *holiness* in the *will* and *affections*: As if Christ had not come into the world to *bear witness of the truth*, which was his great design: as if it were no matter, if God have the heart, so the Devil be in the head: as if no matter that be full of darkness, so the heart be for *God*.

16. The *unsutableness of our conversations to the Gospel of Christ*: 'Tis the only thing the Apostle puts the *Philippians* in mind of, and commits to their care, *Phil.* 1. 27. and truly in these unhappy dayes it hath been the only thing men have neglected and despised: how little care that our conversations should honour the Gospel? *&c.*

17. *Our living by sense, and not by faith.* Surely (my Brethren) among all the sins in *England* that the people of God have cause to be humbled for, there is not any whereby we have more provoked God then by that sin of our unbelief: murmuring, and infidelity, have been our two great sins, for which, it is the wonder of Gods mercy that he hath not caused our carcasses to fall in the wilderness: he may take up that complaint of us that he did of Israel, *Num.* 14. 22. *Because all those men which have seen my glory and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now*

these

these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice, surely they shall not see the land, &c. And this is the lamentation we may take up, that truly to this very day we have not faith enough to carry us from one miracle to another, from one deliverance to another, from one salvation to another: let one deliverance passe over our head, and no sooner one wave rises higher then another, but we are ready to cry out with *Peter. Lord save me, I perish*: and well were it if our fears did issue into tears, and cryes after Christ: we rather are ready to cry out, as those in *Ezek.* 37. 11. *Our bones are dryed, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts.* We are a people that never knew how to honour God in any distress God hath brought us into; never learnt to glorifie God by believing: if we cannot see him, we cannot believe him: surely that which God hath done for us in such a succession of miracles, it might well at least have been food for our faith during our sojourning: In our pilgrimage we might have learned by all that we have seen to believe God: we might have made experience to be the food of our faith: and upon all the providences of divine Power, Wisdome and Goodness we might have discoursed our selves into belief, as *David*, 1 Sam. 17. 37. *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* So *Paul, He hath delivered, and doth deliver; we trust he will also deliver.*

Oh my Brethren! we dishonour God, and starve our faith, by forgetting our experiences, while

while we proclaim by our own Unbelief, That we have a God that we dare not trust. If we perish we may thank ourselves for it: surely if we miscarry, that account may be given for it that we find, *Mat.* 13. 58. *because of their unbelief.* There is a Rest of God before us; if we do not enter in, it is because of our unbelief.

18. *Want of sympathy with the bleeding, gasping, groaning, dying Churches of Jesus Christ.* They have been in great afflictions round about; have call'd unto us, Pity me! Oh! pity me my Friends! for the hand of God is gone out against me. We cannot look any way but we see cause of bitter mourning; but we have not laid the blood of *Germany, Lithuania, Piedmont, &c.* to heart; therefore God may justly lay it to our Charge. Want of fellow-feeling with our Brethren in their afflictions, it is a kind of Persecution, a kind of being accessarie to their Sufferings. That we have not mourned, wept, bled with them; that we have not lyen in the dust, smote on our thighs, &c. God may justly say to us, as *Am.* 6. 6, 7. *They shall go captive with the first that go captive, because they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph. The word in the *Hebrew* signifies, None of them have been *sick* for the affliction of *Joseph*: Oh my Brethren! when did we go to bed *sick* for the afflictions of Gods people abroad? when did their miseries cost us an hours sleep? or a meal? meat? when did we lye in the dust, and cry out, Ah Lord! their Glory? Because we have not shed *tears* for their *blood*, God may justly say, The next turn of *Persecution* shall be yours, Because you have not been afflicted in the afflictions of my people, &c.

19. *Our grievous unsensibleness of Gods Dishonour.* Religion never suffered the like as it hath done these latter dajes by the *pride* and *hypocrisie* of some *Pretenders* to it; Gods name hath been thereby blasphemed by an evil and hypocritical generation; the people of God have lyen under the greatest reproaches and contempts that ever any did under the Heavens; and yet all this while we have not been concerned in it: carried our selves as if unconcern'd in the reproaches of Religion; Blasphemies reflected upon the name of God. Who, in these times of Blasphemy, have gone in secret? lyen in the dust? and cryed with holy *Ioshuah*, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* Jos. 7. 4. We have not laboured to preserve in our own Souls or stir up in our Brethren a holy sence of Gods name, as those primitive Saints, *Mal.* 3. 16. Where are they that have been affected with, and afflicted for the sufferings of the name of God? Oh consider! how little is God and Religion beholden to us for our tears, sighes or groans? What is become of that Childe-like spirit, that was wont to possess the spirits of Gods people? 'Tis perished; and with it, without special timely Repentance, we shall perish also.

20. *That Epidemical sinne of self-seeking, and self-pleasing.* Oh my Brethren! we may revive that complaint of the Apostle, *All seek their own, not the things which are Iesus Christs*, 1 *Phil.* 2. 21. This, This hath been the *source* of all our miseries. While some had *power* in their hands to have done *great things for God*, what did they doe, but neglect the interest and trust in their hands, and fell a feathering

their

their own nests, and building to themselves Houses and Names, that they thought would continue for ever; and to divide the spoyle among themselves, as if their own game they hunted: and others in inferiour stations began to divide, and every one began to snatch, as if the dust of the earth would not serve every one for a handfull; and in the mean time, a sea of Errour, like an inundation, hath been ready to overturn us. Yea, all men seeking to be pleased, not to please; whereas our dutie is, to study to please, not to be pleased, &c.

You see in all this I have not mentioned one of those grosse prophanesses that stare Heaven in the face, as *Drunkeness*, filthy and abominable *Whoredome*, *Fornication*, poured out in every place, horrible *Blasphemy*, contempt of *God* and *Religion*, prophanation of *Gods Sabbath*, &c. because I speak now to those that are *Professors*. I have been giving in a Catalogue of the sinnes of those that professe the name of Christ, that relate to Christ by a special Engagement and Relation; these have been the sinnes of Gods family. And if we would have God repent of the evil of *punishment*, we had need to make haste to repent of the evil of *sinne*: We have been a long time in sinning, we had need be a long time in repenting. I tell you Christians, we have been these late 20. years doing nothing else but sinning against God; and should God let us live twenty years more, it would be too little to weep for the provocations thereof. Learn to lay these and other sinnes so to heart, that God may never lay them to your charge.

The third advice Christ gives here for the prevention of the removal of her Candlestick, is Reformation, [*do the first works*] Reformation, that indeed is a fruit and evidence of sound Repentance: Repentance is nothing else but the breaking of the heart *for* and *from* sinne.

I have spoken of it merely as it is the contrition of the Soul for sinne; I come to speak a word of the other part, as it consists in *turning to God*, and *doing our first works*.

This is the method God prescribes his people, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, &c.* under Gods afflicting hand, instead of *reforming*? Men are prone to fall a complaining, not only *naturally*, as Irrational creatures may under some pinching extremity; but *sinfully*, i.e. when their *natural grief* is let out in a distempered and inordinate manner; when *natural groanes* are accompanied with *unscriptural affections*, which vents it self

1. Sometimes upon the *affliction*, as if but one intolerable burden in the world, and God must needs lay that upon them. *Lam.* 1. 12. & 3. 1. & 7. 10.

2. Sometimes of *instruments*; thus *Esau* complains of his brother; is he not rightly called *Iacob* a *Supplanter*? of his Father, *hast thou but one blessing, &c.* *Gen.* 27. 3, 4. of any thing rather than of himself; he doth not say, *Am I not rightly called Esau? What a wretch am I that have despised and sold my blessing?* Mostly we complain of that which deserves no blame, the *guilty* of the *innocent*; 1 *Kings* 18. 7. *Isa.* 10. 5. *ler.*

Jer. 8. or we pore too much upon *second causes*, or complain of instruments, not of our selves or of wicked men, not of wickedness; of their Cruelty, more than of their Blasphemy; of their injuries against us, more than as Gods enemies; or more of revenge in our Complaints, than murmuring; our complaints concerning their afflicting us, not accompanied with our prayers for their Conversion, &c.

3. Sometimes of *God himself*, not as one of his Children, who complains

1. *To* God, not *of* God; thus Christ, *My God, my God, &c.*

2. With a holy Confidence, *my God, my God*; two words of *faith*, for one word of *fear, &c.*

3. In his Complaints, is very tender of Gods glory; afraid to think or speak a hard or uncomely thought or word of God.

4. Carefully distinguishes between what God doth, and what man doth; observes and separates the *unrighteousness* of men from the *righteousness* of God.

5. With humble inquiry what *cause* may be of his dispensation, *Job* 10. 2. & 34. 31.

6. With a disposition to bring up his will to God; not that God should bring down his will to him; if it be possible let this *Cup pass*; however, glorifie thy *name*, provide for thy *own glory*, and do with *me* as *thou pleasest*. But as a *sinfull Creature*, sometimes ready to call *Providence in question*, Ez. 8. 12. or to break forth and charge God foolishly, either of too much *severity*, Ez. 18. 2, 25. or of too long *delay*, *Is.* 49. 14. or their *mournings* are turned into *murmurings*, Num. 14. 27. or their *complaints* are mixed with *unbelief*, Ps. 78. 19. or of

their punishment, not of their sinne; and nothing will satisfie them but *deliverance*.

Now this is not the way; for this way of complaining is,

1. *Fruitlesse*; a House on Fire is not quenched with *tears*; Murmuring will not scatter the Clouds.

2. *Causeless*; Thou hast thy life for a *prey*, *Jer.* 4. 5, 6. What a *living man* and *complain*, and that when 'tis for the punishment of his *sinnes*? this kind of *complaining* is *causeless*; if you compare *sinne* and *punishment* together, there's no proportion; for *sinne* is a transgression against an infinite God; *punishment* but an affliction upon the finite Creature: *Sinne* is an evil against God; *punishment* an evil against the Creature: Or, if you consider *what sinne is* in its *nature*, 'tis a *contrariety* to Gods *nature*; (God is holy; Sinne impuritie) A contradiction to Gods will; (God saith, *Do this*; the Sinner saith, *I will not*: God saith, *Do not this abominable thing which I hate*; the Sinner saith, *I will*:) 'Tis the transgression of Gods pure and holy Law; nay, 'tis a practical blaspheming against all the *names of God*; the *rape* of Gods *mercy*, and the *dare* of Gods *justice*, the *challenge* of Gods *power*; Sinne gives the *lye* to Gods *truth*, and the *fool* to Gods *wisdome*. And what can Sinne do more than to take away Gods *good name*? Gods *being*? and that, Sin would do. Or, 'tis *causeless*, if you consider against whom sinne is, *i. e. God himself*, who is a *jealous* God; now a Sinner takes another Lover into his bosome before his eyes; yea he is a *holy*, *righteous*, *omnipotent*, *almighty*, *living God*: Thoughts of this

may

may well keep us from complaining. Indeed whatever our affliction be, we have as much cause to give thanks as to mourn; whether you consider, whatever the punishment be, it might be worse; or do but look well into it, you will see more Mercy than Affliction, *Psal.* 119 75.

3. *Sinful.* There is in it, 1. *unthankfulnesse*; while we complain of one Affliction, we overlook a thousand Mercies; whereas true Grace is ingenuous, and can see a little Kindnesse mingled with a great deal of Severity. The Church of God in captivity comparing her *afflictions* with her *mercies*, breaks forth, *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed*, Lam. 3. 22. blessed be God, 'tis not yet *so bad*, but it might be *worse*; 2 Cor. 4. 8. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed*: though laid wait for, beset on every side, put to strive and struggle, yet we escape; God gives an issue in the Temptation: *we are perplexed, but not in despair*; we are not so helpless that we know not whither to turn our selves; we have a God to go to, as bad as things are; the name of the Lord is a strong tower: *persecuted, but not forsaken*; we are shaken out, but not to shivers; persecuted, but not conquered; our God hath not utterly forsaken us: *Cast down but not destroyed* Ps. 118. 13. we are cast *down*, but not cast *off*. Thus *Luther*, *They may thrust me back, but they cannot thrust me down*; *they may crush me, but they cannot kill me*: or, *they may kill me, but they cannot hurt me*; *they may shew their teeth, but they can't devour*. Is it a Feaver? it might have been eternal *flames*; Is it Scarcity? there might be universal *famine*; Is it the danger of losing the *Gospel*? 'tis the mercy of God it is not done already: Are we in

Captivity? we might have been in Hell; are we in Priſon? it might have been *Tophet*: *The Lord hath chaſtened me ſore, but he hath not given me over unto death.* Pſ. 118. 18. Though men have loſt their Bowels, Gods *compaſſions* fail not; God's as faithfull as ever; he hath taken away ſome of our mercies, but he hath not taken away all; he hath left us more than he hath taken: They are new, they are renewed every morning; when old mercies are ſpent, God ſends us new; he is *the Father of Mercies*, begets new mercies every moment. VVho can number or meaſure his mercies of one day? whatever our Fears are, Oh bleſſed be God, he loads us with mercies.

Now the *Complainer* overlooks all theſe; there's much unthankfulneſs in it, and that a kind of Atheiſme, *She knew not that I gave her corn and wine*, &c. *Hoſ.* 2. 8.

2. *Pride*; only by *pride* comes *contention*; men never quarrel with God about their Condition, but 'tis long of the *pride* of their heart. Proud man would fain ſinne, and not hear from God; would take liberty to ſinne, but would not have God take liberty to puniſh, *Iſay* 8. 3. God muſt take notice of our Duties, not of our Sinnes. God ſhall hear of it, if he take not notice of our *prayers*; but it ſhall be by complaining if he take notice of our *ſinnes*. A proud man whatever he *hath*, it no more than his *due*; and whatever he *wants*, God's his *debtor*, *Hoſea* 6. 13.

The

The want of a Complement undoeth them in the midst of honour: If we want but one thing our hearts would have, surely nature is proud and ready to pick quarrels with God on the least occasion; nay if he will not give that mercy we would, take all, &c.

3. Rebellion; God strikes him for sin, he strikes against God; *Ier.* 31. 18. God draws one way, and he another, &c.

4. *Unbelief.* He that complains of his punishment, never believed sin to be so great an evil, or God to be such a One as revealed in the Word.

5. Interpretative *Blasphemy.*

1. While we dispute our afflictions, and wrangle with the present dispensation, what is it but to make our selves wiser than God? We seem to tell God how it might have been better, and so we do as it were give God Counsel: When he calls for Obedience, is not that Blasphemy to set up our wisdome against God's?

2. While we complain of Punishment, we take sins part against God; we do as it were justifie sin, and judge God: God is unrighteous to punish such a sin as this with such grievous Afflictions.

3. By Complaining we do as it were summon God to our Bar, to come and give an account of his action at our Tribunal. What poor miserable Creatures

tures are we, that in our Afflictions are so far from helping our selves, that we commonly add to our own misery!

No Affliction is intolerable, till sin come in it.

The yoke God hath made easie, we make intolerable, and make God to be our enemy, while he by Affliction would become our friend.

Now this being found not to be the way; that which God counsels and advises, is,

1. Self Examination: [*Let us search and try our wayes.*] Sin and Hypocrisie lies close and deep; therefore we must take pains, dig to the bottom, set up a Tribunal in our own Conscience, summon, try, judge our selves over and over, in Gods presence: He stands at our Closet Doores, to hear what we will say, *Ier.* 8. 6. before execution; what Indictments we will bring in against our selves.

We can tell what such a Drunkard, such an unclean person, &c. hath done; but no man saith, What have I done? My pride, my unthankfulnesse, my unfruitfulnesse, &c.

2. Reformation. [*and turn again to the Lord.*] Sin is *aversio a Deo & conversio ad creaturam*, Reformation is a turning again from the creature to God.

3. Frequent and fervent prayer: [*Let us lift up*] There's the frequency, lets do nothing else but pray; lets

lets be continually lifting up our prayers; make your houses houses of prayer: Thus *David*, *Thou fought'st against me without a Cause* (Did he take Counsel against Princes to be disloyal? To take up Arms? No.) *But I gave my self unto prayer*, *Psal.* 109. 4. Therefore if you prayed before, now do nothing else: it notes habitual and constant prayer. [Our Hearts with our Hands] to crave, and as it were to pull down mercy, as if we would wrestle with God, and say, *Nay, I will not let thee go, until thou blesse me*, *Gen.* 32. 26. it notes our fervency: And for our encouragement, it is [Unto God in the Heavens.] which expresses his Soveraigaty, Omniscience, Omnipotency, Everlastingnesse, &c.

4. Judging our selves, or Confession of sin [*We have transgressed.*]

5. Aggravating our sins [*and have rebelled*] *i. e.* we have turned sin into Rebellion; Rebellion hath been the aggravation of our sins; we have sinned against the cleerest light, dearest love, &c. *Nehem.* 9. *Ezra* 9. *Dan.* 9.

6. Justifying God [*thou hast not pardoned*,] A word, not of murmurring, complaining, or accusing God of hard dealing; but by way of justifying God; we have transgressed, therefore thou hast not pardoned: Why should'st thou repent of the evil of punishment, when we have not repented of the evil of sin? Thou hast punished us lesse then our Iniquities deserve.

So

So in the Text [*Do the first works*] Sin is a departure from God; Repentance a comming back again to God. Turn thou to him from whom the Children of Israel have deeply revolted. The soul hath many turnings and windings; but there's the best motion of all when the Soul (with the Dove) returns to God, from whom it came.

Apostacy is the losse of our *first love*: *Repentance* is the Recovery of it, and *Reformation* is the *doing* of our *first works*. I have not time to enlarge as I desire; I shall onely offer a few things, that might help to quicken you to this great duty.

My Brethren, we have no great cause to boast of *Englands first love*: Never so good as it should be yet many can remember when *England* hath been much better then tis.

Time was, when Doctrines have been more sound; *Discipline* more exercised for the suppressing of sin and profanenesse; *Ordinances* kept more pure from sinful mixtures; when *London* kept *Sabbaths* better then now; loved their *Godly Ministers* more then now; honoured them that were set over her, for their works sake; would have thought nothing too good for a faithful Minister; when Christians loved one another with a deare hearty-fervent love; when there was lesse *Complement*, but more real love and affection among Christians; when Christians improved their meetings, converse, Christian Conference, and other soul duties to better purpose then now; not to foo-

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liſh diſputations, or wanton ſenſual exceſſes, but to their mutual edification; when they improved their time for comparing their evidences, communicating their experiences, and building up one another in their moſt holy faith; when there was more Induſtry in Profeſſors then now, to bring in *Converts*; when private Chriſtians though it their duty to be ſubſervient to the vvork of their *Miniſters*, to bring in others to Chriſt, eſpecially their Family.

Time vvas vvhen more care of *Young Converts* then novv; vvhen none could have looked out after Religion, but ſome or other ready to lend them their hand, and ſhevv them the vvay, explaining it clearly to them; but novv Young Converts may be ſnapt into ſeparations and errour, and none looks after them.

Time vvas vvhen more care of the truly godly poor; vvhen errour vvas more odious; vvhen Popery vvas more hated then novv; vvhen the name of a Toleration vvould have made Chriſtians to have trembled; vvhen Chriſtians vvere better acquainted vvith their Bibles; vvhen more time ſpent in ſecret prayer; vvhen more tender of one anothers Names and Honours, vvould heal one anothers Reputations, and vvould ſpread the lap of Charity over thoſe miſreports and ſcandals that might be caſt upon them; vvhen Chriſtians rejoyced more in one anothers good and mourned in one anothers ſufferings; vvhen Chriſtians did more earneſtly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, &c.

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Oh do you, not onely *your first works*, but our *fore-fathers first works*: Be as zealous for God and his truths, as tender, mutually careful of one another and as they.

Our fears be very great, and truly our provocations be greater; our dangers are great, but our sins greater yet here is a word, here is matter of incouragement, that yet there is *Balm in Gilead*, Phisick of Christs ovvn composition, for the reviving and healing of a back-sliding people, Christians Christ Jesus is become your Phisician, he hath prescribed you a potion made up of these three ingredients, *Self-Deflection*, *Holy Contrition*, *Thorow Reformation*. Christians, novv take this Receipt, Christ advises you, if you vvill not, there is no vvay but one, *Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick.*

There is yet a means or tvvo I find in Scripture for the preventing of threatned ruin that hath been very near, that God hath prescribed for a people or person in great danger, vvhen ready to be cut off and destroyed.

Novv that vvhich I vvould commend to you, in reference to vvhat you vvould beg of God for *England*, is,

First, In your addressing your self to God for that mercy your souls are set upon, and you vvrestle vvith God for, that you vvould make some special Vovv to God. I find the Saints have done so; vvhen reduced to great Straits, not knovving vvhat to do: Thus

Jacob

Jacob vowed a Vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my fathers house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this Stone which I here set for a pillar, shall be Gods house. Gen. 28.20, 21, 22. The special thing *Jacob* vows, is, that he would continue in the pure worship of his fore-fathers, that he would still honour God as his God, in that way he would be worshipped; the special thing is, that he would build a house for the worship of God; here he would erect a place of publick worship. And thus *Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their Cities.* *Num.* 21. 2. They vowed a vow they would not spare any of the enemies of God, if he would deliver them into their hands. Thus *Jephthah, Hannah, David,* &c. *Judg.* 11. 30. 1 *Sam.* 1. 11. *Psal.* 132. 1, 2. Certainly in times of great distresse, tis not improper or uncomely, but that which God may expect and take well, that you make some special Vow, if God would prevent your fears; if God would continue forfeited mercies, dearer to you then your lives, you would set apart some special thing for God, something for the propagation of the Gospel abroad, for the maintenance of a godly ministry at home, for setting up the preaching of the Gospel in the dark corners of the Kingdom, &c. This must have some cautions with it; as

1. We must be sure our Vow be of what is in our own power; we must not make vows of that which is none

none of our own. *I hate Robbery for burnt offerings.*

We must not make a vow to God of that which hath been unjustly or unrighteously taken away, or withheld from any. 'Tis *Sacriledg* instead of a *Sacrifice.*

2. It must be of things warrantable and justifiable by the Word.

3. It must be of such things that we are not bound to doe, before vows, by the standing Obligation of Religion, and of our Profession; but of something that is in our own choice, that we will *voluntarily* make a free-will offering of to God.

4. We must take heed that we do not entertain a superstitious thought of our own vowes, as if we had merited a mercy at Gods hands by our vowes; God looks for some special vow at our hands, that we may shew how much we prize and value the mercy we would have, that we would be content to part with any thing, though to the halfe of our Estate for it.

2. Another thing I find, is, that in the mean time we should do something by way of extraordinary bounty and charity to the relief of Gods indigent Servants. Thus the Prophet *Daniel*, Wherefore, *O King, let my counsel be acceptable to thee; break off thy Sins by Righteousnesse, and thine Iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity*, Dan. 4. 27.

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The Prophet adviſes him to break off his Sinnes by Righteouſneſſe, there's Reformation; and beſides Reformation, that he would do ſomething in an extraordinary way to the relief of the poor. *Mercy to the poor*, what's that?

Interpreters conceive, by the *poor* here, he underſtands *Gods poor*, i.e. the poor Jews, that were now in the *Babylonian captivity*; he adviſes he would do ſomething by way of ſympathy to the Jews, to eaſe their yoaks and oppreſſions; break off thy Iniquities by pitying & ſhewing mercy to thy poor Captives under thy power now at this time; take off their yoake, eaſe their burdens, and reſtore them to their liberties again. Thus do you and thoſe that have been the inſtruments of your Converſion, or Edification, ſet apart ſomething extraordinarie for their relief and ſupply. The Prophet *Daniel* ſeems to adviſe this to the King as it were, by way of ſatisfaction.

There be two things in Repentance; in wrongs we have done there muſt be Confeſſion, and Satisfaction or Reſtoration: He ſeems to adviſe this to make up compleat Repentance; namely, to make Reſtoration and Retribution of what he had injuriouſly taken from the Jewes. Oh then! let me ſay, without breach of Charity, that whatſoever, except it be in this caſe of extraordinary ſupplyes for his poor, it will be found but making Reſtitution and Satisfaction. It may be upon a two fold ground.

1. With ſome it may be truly Reſtitution and Reſtoration of what he hath *taken away* by *unjuſt means*, God knows how; that's between God and their own Souls, what unlawful means hath been uſed to augment the heap, and ſwell their Eſtate.

If there be any that hears me this day, whoſe Conſciences ſhall tell them, that they have increaſed their Eſtate by undue and unwarrantable means; Oh *Reſtore, Reſtore, break off your Iniquities by ſhewing mercy, &c.* by making Reparation as you can; it will be but like *Zacheus* giving half his goods to the poor, and reſtoring four-fold, &c. in a liberal Contribution to the poor.

2. It will be Reſtitution in another ſence, in reference to an *unjuſt withholding*; ſome have have got injuriouſly, and I am afraid too too many have kept injuriouſly: Have we not *rob'd* the *poor* by an unjuſt denying of what God hath commanded us to diſtribute to their neceſſities? *there is that withholdeth more than is meet*, &c. *Prov.* 3. 17. & 11. 24. It may be God hath given you ſo much; there's Gods ſhare, there's the Miniſters portion, &c. Now all that you have withheld beyond the *Rule of Scripture*, is all *ſtoln goods*, and is like a Wheat-ſheat on fire, will burn down the whole barne of corn.

That which I would exhort you to, is, every one to ſet apart ſome conſiderable part of your Eſtate, and account it as a hallowed thing, dedicated to God, as a thing

thing which to touch were Sacriledge; that you may be ready on all occasions, in all regular and due wayes, to bring out for the relief of the Poor; you know objects abounding in every place, and you may expect warrantable means for dispenceing of what God shall put into your hearts in this matter.

SERMON VII

JOHN 8. 29.

Dr Jacomb:

And he that ſent me, is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do alwayes thoſe things that pleaſe him.

I Was upon theſe words in the morning; having ſpoken ſomething to them as they referre to Chriſt who ſpake them here of himſelf; I then brought them down to his Members, Believers: and ſo propounded this Obſervation from them, *That whoever they are that deſire to pleaſe God, to do the things that are pleaſing to*

him, God will be with such, and the Father will not leave such alone, especially in a time of suffering and trouble.

In the prosecuting of this point I spake to four things, which I shall not now repeat, but come to the mark which I intend at present; and that is, to make some Application.

1. Let me endeavour to prevail with every one of you, so to carry your selves in your several places and capacities, that whatever you do, you may please God.

It was a blessed testimony that was given of *Enoch, Heb.* 11. 6. *Before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* Oh! how happy will they be at the great day of Judgement, who shall be singled out by Christ, before Angels and men; and Christ shall say of them, This was the Man, or this was the Woman that pleased God: There is a great deal of pleasing in the World, but there are but very few that make this their businesse, to please God; therefore I would have you shun that which is sinfull, and presse after that which is matter of Duty.

1. There are some that mind nothing but to please themselves, to promote their own interest, to love their own ease, to indulge themselves in their own carnal delights; but they never mind the good of others, or the pleasing of God; the Apostle speaks of and against these, *Rom.* 15. 1, 2, 3.

2. There are others that look no further than the pleasing of men; if they can but keep fair with men, and

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ſhun the diſpleaſure of men, that is all they aime at; but my Brethren, what a poor thing is it to pleaſe man, and diſpleaſe God? what a poor thing is it to have Man to be your Friend, and God to be your Enemy! to have the ſmiles of a poor dying periſhing Worme, and to lye under the frownes of the great God!

Indeed there is a good pleaſing of men, to pleaſe them for their Edification, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 15. 2. and ſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks of himſelf, 1 *Cor.* 10. 32. *Even as I pleaſe all men in all things*, that is, in all things that are of an indifferent nature, not ſimply civil, nor ſimply good, in all ſuch things.

This Apoſtle was of a yielding and complying ſpirit, that he might thereby the better inſinuate himſelf into the affections of men, and be more inſtrumental to the glory of God in the work of the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 22. *To the weak became I as weak, that* I *might gain the weake; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome; and this* I *do for the Goſpels ſake.*

But now in matter of Dutie, ſuch things as are expreſly determined by God, and ſo are either good or evil; in theſe things the Apoſtle would be no pleaſer of men: *If I ſhould pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt*, 1 Gal. It is good to pleaſe others to their Edification; but we muſt not pleaſe others to their own ruine and condemnation; It is good to pleaſe men, when we can ſo do, and not grieve God.

Inſtead of pleaſing men, let it be your conſtant care and beſt endeavour in all things to pleaſe God: my Brethren this is a duty of ſo great importance, that was I now to take my leave of you, and ſhould certainly know that I

ſhould never ſpeak to you more, as we are come very near to that; for though I ſpeak to you as a living man, yet I ſpeak to you as a dying Miniſter; this I ſay is a duty of that weight and importance, that I know not what to preſſe upon you more material than this; conſult but two places of Scripture, *Col.* 1. *For this cauſe we do not ceaſe to pray for you*: What was the thing the Apoſtle in this his conſtant Prayer did begge of God for them? It was this, That they might pleaſe God; and when he was taking his leave in the winding up of his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *Now the God of peace, that b ought again from the dead our Lord Ieſus, the great ſhepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight.*

I need not go beyond the Text for Motives to ſtirre you up to theſe Endeavours: For

Motive 1. Firſt, Conſider what that God is which I would have you endeavour to pleaſe; He is that God which made Heaven and Earth; that God before whom all this World is as nothing, but as a little duſt in the ballance, and as a drop of water to the bucket; that God whom Angels adore and worſhip; that God who by a word from his mouth is able to bring the whole Univerſe into nothing. Will not you ſtudy to pleaſe this God? But further conſider what this God is to you: He is the fountain of your being; he is the God of all your mercies; he is your Creatour and Soveraign; he is your Maker and Law-giver. It is he that by a ſmile can make you happy, and by a frowne can make you miſerable; it is he that hath Heaven and Hell at

at his diſpoſal, *who openeth and none can ſhut, who ſhuts and none can open.* He that muſt judge every one of you either to eternal bleſſedneſſe, or elſe to eternal torments; it is he in whoſe hands your breath, your life, your ſoul, your All is; will you not endeavour to pleaſe this God? as the Prophet argueth in point of fear, *Iſay* 51. 12. *Who art thou that art afraid of a man that ſhall dye, or of the Son of man that ſhall be made as graſſe, and forgetteſt the Lord thy maker?* Oh poor Creature, who art thou that goeſt about to pleaſe a mortal dying man, and doſt not go about to pleaſe the Great God, thy Creatour, and Soveraigne!

2. Conſider that Relation wherein you profeſſe your ſelves to ſtand to God; he is your Maſter, you his Servants; he is your Father, you his Children; he is your Lord, you his Subjects: You know all that are in cloſe Relations, will ſtudy to pleaſe them that are above them, as the Servant his Maſter, the Childe his Father, the Subject his Prince; All perſons that are in a ſtate of Inferiority, will ſtudy to pleaſe their Superiours, eſpecially when they do depend upon them. Oh! how infinitely is God above thoſe Relations! Alas, there is but a very little diſtance betwixt you and your Servants, and yet you expect they ſhould pleaſe you; will you not therefore pleaſe God? eſpecially conſidering your dependence upon him.

3. You ſhall not loſe by pleaſing God; that is enough to put us upon this; He that pleaſeth God, profiteth himſelf; in that very act wherein we pleaſe God,

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we profit our selves: Men can do but little for us, and yet upon what they can do, we study to please them.

Let me open this in a few particulars:

1. If you will sincerely endeavour in all things to please God, God will give you a gracious return to all your prayers. Oh what a mercy is this for a man to have his prayers answered by God! 1 *John* 3. 22. *Whatever we aske, we receive of him, because we keep his commandements, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.* Never expect that God should hear any Prayers, if we do not endeavour to do those things that please him.

2. Do you please God, and he will please you; Mercy pleaseth us, and Duty pleaseth God. Now when we please God in a way of Duty, he will please us in a way of Mercy: If we order our wayes so as to please God, he will order his wayes so as to please us.

3. Great is the benefit of pleasing God, even as to men; and this *Solomon* sets before you, *Prov.* 16. 7. *When a mans wayes please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him*; and he hath such another expression, *Prov.* 22. 11. *He that loveth pureness of heart, the King shall be his Friend*: the meaning of this Scripture is this, When we keep close to God, and walk in complyance with his will, and make it our great design to please him, He will give us to find favour in the eyes of men: He that maketh God his Friend, God will make that mans Enemies to be his Friends. Men are possibly full of Anger, Revenge, and Exaspe-

Exasperation: be it so: Do you desire to please God? God can turne their Hearts towards you; God can sweeten them in their Spirits, and take away that Venome that is in them: so you know he did in the Case of *Esau* to his Brother *Jacob*.

4. This is the way to Heaven and Happiness; God will be pleased before the Sinner shall be saved. *Heb.* 11. Enoch *before his translation had this testimony that he pleased God*; there is no way to Heaven but by this way: the Childe pleaseth the Father, and then the Father giveth him the Inheritance. So it is here.

5. Let me return to the Argument in the Text; God will never leave them alone, that desire sincerely to please him. Methinks this should be a very prevailing Motive to you, especially now; Please God, and he will never leave you, no not in a time of distress and trouble. Here is the great difference betwixt a faithfull God, and a false Man.

In time of trouble and adversity men leave us and forsake us; in time of prosperity then they flatter us, and pretend a great deal of friendship and kindness: But as no man looks upon the Dial when the Sunne is under a cloud; so these very men that pretend so much of kindness and friendship, if so be we do but come under a frown, or into trouble, then their friendship and kindness is at an end, as *Paul* said, No man stood by him when he came to be tryed before *Nero*; all men forsook him, but God did not forsake him. The wise man hath an expression, *Prov.* 17. 17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity*; But where shall we find such a friend? and indeed where

shall

ſhall we find ſuch a brother? But now if you will pleaſe God, God will ſtand by you when all men leave you; When you have the greateſt need of God, he will then ſtand by you; If you be in a Priſon, he will be with you; If you be baniſhed, he will be with you: If Sinne do'h not part God and you, certainly no Affliction ſhall part God and you.

Studie to pleaſe God; Oh! is it not a ſad thing for God to leave you? that is the ſaddeſt of all; when we loſe God, we loſe all, *Hoſ.* 9. 12. *Vvo unto them when I depart from them.* What are all the mercies if God leave you? no more than if a man ſhou d have a fair pleaſant Houſe, and never ſee the Sunne more.

Oh do the things that alwayes pleaſe the Lord, and he will never leave you; under mercies, under afflictions he will be with you, and then your mercies ſhall be verie ſweet, and your afflictions ſhall not be very bitter; You know how earneſt *Moſes* was, *Num.* 10. 31. with his Father in law, *Hobab* the *Midianite*, *Leave us not I pray thee, foraſmuch as thou knoweſt how we are to encamp in the wilderneſs, and thou mayſt be to us as eyes.* Oh keep God to you, eſpecially when you are entering into the wilderneſs of trouble, God will be to you inſtead of eyes; he will be your Counſellor, your Comforter, your Guide, your Treaſure, your Portion, your All.

I might adde one thing more in the laſt place.

Studie to pleaſe God, becauſe he is ſo eaſie to be pleaſed; this is a motive to us to endeavour to pleaſe

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thoſe perſons who are eaſie to be pleaſed; a Childe that hath a Father that is eaſie to be pleaſed, a Servant that hath a Maſter that is eaſie to be pleaſed, will ſtudy to pleaſe them. Sincerity pleaſeth God, though in the midſt of much infirmity; He is ſo gracious and mercifull, that whereſoever a poor ſinner doth but deſire to pleaſe God, he will accept of thoſe deſires; If we can but pleaſe God, it is no great matter whether we we pleaſe men or not.

I ſhall conclude this branch with 1 *Theſ.* 4. 1. *We beſeech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Ieſus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walke and pleaſe God, that you would abound more and more.*

Uſe 2. By way of direction I ſhould here ſhew you how you are to pleaſe God. I told you in general in the morning this pleaſing of God lyeth in two things.

1. In ſuitableneſs to his Nature.

2. In ſubjection to his Law.

If you would pleaſe God in all your Actions, look to this, That what you doe may bear ſome reſemblance to his Nature, and hold forth obedience to his Law.

Conſult the will of God, and in all things act in conformity to that will; doe not allow your ſelves in the Commiſſion of any known ſinne, for that will certainly diſpleaſe God; as it was ſaid of *David* when he took *Bathſheba* to Wife: but ſaith the Text,

Text, *the thing displeased the Lord.* Do not bauk any known duty, for that will displease God.

In a word, be holy in all manner of Conversation.

This being too general, I shall not insist upon it; only in a word more particularly,

Do those things now, make Conscience of those Duties which now lye upon you, in the doing of which you will certainly please God: And they are such as these:

Be stedfast in the good wayes of God; in the midst of a backsliding and apostatizing age, stand fast to the law of God, *Phil.* 4. 1. *Contend for the faith which is delivered to the Saints*, the 3d. Verse of the Epistle of *Jude.*

Be not ashamed to own Christ before all the World; if you be ashamed of him on Earth, he will be ashamed of you in heaven; and woe be to that Sinner whom Christ is ashamed to own.

Reckon Reproaches for the Name of Christ better than the pleasure of sinne that is but for a season.

When God calleth you to it, assert the purity and spirituality of Gospel-worship; Do not place Religion in a few Shadowes where the Substance is neglected; but chiefly mind Self-denial, Mortification, Crucifixi-

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on to the World, keeping up close Communion with God.

Love the people of God whatever the World say or think of thee; for God is highly pleased when he seeth his Children loved.

Keep up Religion in your Families, whatever scorne or contempt is cast upon you. Oh that you would labour to be of *Abrahams* spirit; *I know*, sayth God, *he will command his Children and his Houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18.19.

I do not know any one better means for the keeping up of Religion in this Nation, than for Masters of Families to be consciencious in the discharging of this Duty.

Be good in bad times; be Patterns of good works to those that shall behold you.

Let no Reproach or Obloquy make you to abate your exact walking with God; whatever you meet withall in the wayes of Holyness and a strict life, say, If this be to be vile, I will be more vile.

Make Conscience of a strict observation of the Lords day; take heed of that Sacriledge of stealing away holy time; of prostituting that to common and civil use, which is impropriated and dedicated to the service of God.

Pray

Pray for, and love all those that have been instrumental for your spiritual good in the work of the Ministry, whatever dirt is now thrown in their Faces, and though you never get more good by them.

Forget not to distribute to the necessities of Gods people, that are many of them in a low condition; for this is a sacrifice of a sweet Odour, and well pleasing to him.

Carry your selves with all Patience and Christian meekness towards them that wrong you: Pray for them that are your Enemies; and when you are reviled, revile not again, but commit your selves to that God which judgeth Righteously.

Do your Duty to your Superiours, and to those that are in Authority.

So carry your selves, that it may be with you as it was with *Daniel*; they had nothing against him, saving in the matter of his God.

Bauk not any Duty for suffering: Choose the greatest of Suffering, before the least of Sinne.

In a word, So walk as it becommeth the Gospel: And finally, I speak to you, as the Apostle spake to them, *Phil.* 2. 16. *Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoyce in the day of Christ, that I have not runne in vain, nor laboured in vain.*

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The third uſe is for comfort, to all thoſe that do conſcientiouſly endeavonr in all things to pleaſe God; the comfort lies in this, you may ſuffer; but whenever you ſuffer, the Father will not leave you alone; pleaſing of God does not ſecure a man from ſuffering from men, ſometimes it rather expoſes a man to ſuffer from men: But now, though it does not prevent ſuffering, yet it takes away the ſting and venome of ſuffering; it makes it to be like *Sampſons* Lyon, when it was ſlain, he found nothing but honey in the belly of it. Oh! the preſence of God in a time of affliction, is exceeding precious; it turns gall into honey, thornes into roſes. Bee not troubled in your thoughts, about what you may undergo; if God be with you, all will be well; if God comes when the croſſe cometh, the weight of it ſhall never hurt you: what is a priſon when God is there? My brethren, though eſtate leave you, relations leave you, all your comforts leave you; ſo long as God doth not leave you, it will be well; therefore do not fear, be not dejected or diſcouraged. *Iſa.* 43. 1, 2. *Fear not, O Jacob*; why ſo? *when thou paſſeſt through the water, I will be with thee.* We have more reaſon to be afraid of proſperity, with Gods abſence, then of adverſity, with Gods preſence. A good God will make every condition to be good; it is not a priſon but a pallace, where God is: they that do the things that pleaſe God, whatever condition they may be brought to, the Father will not leave them alone. Miniſters may leave you, the meanes of Grace, and Ordinances, in a great meaſure may

leave you, your creature enjoyments and comforts may leave you; but here is a God that will never leave you; oh! bleſs his holy name.

Fourthly, is this pleaſing of God a duty of ſo great importance, and benefit? Then be tender and charitable in judging of thoſe that do differ from you and others, upon this account, becauſe they dare not diſpleaſe God. I may in this caution, aime at my ſelf, and others of my brethren in the work of our miniſtry; but I am not here at preſent to take my laſt farewell; I hope I may have a little further opportunity of ſpeaking to you; but if not, let me require this of you, to paſs a charitable interpretation upon our laying down the exerciſe of our miniſtry; there is a greater judge then you, muſt judge us all at the great day; and to this judge, we can appeal before Angels and Men; that it is not this thing, or that thing, that puts us upon this diſſent, but it is conſcience towards God, and fear of offending him. I cenſure none that differ from me, as though they diſpleaſe God; but yet, as to my ſelf, ſhould I do thus and thus, I ſhould certainly violate the peace of my own conſcience, and offend God, which I muſt not do; no, not to ſecure my miniſtry; though that either is, or ought to be, dearer to me then my very life; and how dear it is, God only knoweth. Do not add affliction to affliction, be not uncharitable in judging of us, as if through pride, faction, obſtinacy, or devotedneſſe to a party, or which is worſe then all, in oppoſition to authority, we do diſſent; the judge of all hearts knows it is not ſo.

But

But it is merely from thoſe apprehenſions which after prayer, and the uſe of all meanes, do yet continue; that doing thus and thus, we ſhould diſpleaſe God; therefore deal charitably with us in this day of our affliction. If we be miſtaken, I pray God to convince us: if others be miſtaken, whether in a publick or private capacity, I pray God in mercy convince them; but however things go, God will make good this truth to us; in this work he will not leave us, and our Father will not leave us alone; for it is the unfained deſire of our ſoul, in all things to pleaſe God.

FINIS.

SERMON VIII.

COLOSS. 2. 6, 7. Mr Baxter:.

As yee have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

Rooted and built in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

OMitting the division, and in part the opening of the words, the observation is this; That those that have received Christ Jesus the Lord, must accordingly be rooted, built up in him, and stablished in the faith,

and walk in him as they have been taught, and abound herein with thanksgiving,

This *receiving* of *Christ* signifies to believe in him. It is not onely to *receive* his *Doctrine* or *Benefits*, but to *receive* his *Person*, to receive him as related to us, for the uses and end for which hee came into the world, and for which hee offers himself to soules by the preaching of the Gospel. *Sinners* have lost and undone themselves; Christ comes to be the Physician of soules; hee will not save the *unwilling* and *despisers of his grace*; while they *continue* in their *unwillingnesse*. He will save them by the way of *covenant*; while he consents and tenders them his *grace*, hee will have them *consent to the termes of his Covenant*. The consent of the heart expresst by our covenanting with him, is this receiving of Jesus Christ. He is willing to be our *Physitian*, and when wee take him to be so, wee receive him. He is willing to save us from the guilt and power of sin, willing to be our Lord, Head, Intercessor with God, Justifier and *all* unto us; and if we consent to this, and take him as offered, this is receiving Christ; with whom his benefits are also received, the remission of sins, in-dwelling, renewing, comforting spirit, title to everlasting life, &c. In the receiving Christ all this is received.

Receiving of Christ contains these two things; or these two things are essentially contain'd

tain'd to make up the nature of saving Faith: *i. e.* to believe the Doctrine of the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ to be true, and to consent that the goodnesse that is therein revealed and proposed shall be ours To believe what Christ *is*, and what he hath *done* so far to believe it, as here we are resolv'd to venture our souls, (though there may be some weakneſse through our faith's imperfection) and believing this Gospel to be the certain word of God. Then next, to entertain the Christ that is offered in this Gospel to be ours, with all the benefits that accompany, and to all the blessed ends to which he is revealed: Thus the water of life is freely tendered to all that are *athirst*, and there is no more required but *come* and *drink*.

Then there is two things implyed, that are the immediate products of this saving Faith, and inseparable from it: *i.e. trusting* on him as *the Redeemer*, and *obeying* him as a Lord. To *rest* upon him as a *Redeemer*, Rom. 15. 12. And here, as far as the soul feels entertainment and encouragement by Christ, overcoming his doubts that Christ will reject him, &c. so far hee hath quietneſs of soul in Christ, and will trust his soul upon Christ. And then, the *obeying* of him in order to our full recovery, (as a Patient must obey his Physitian) in using his remedies, and meanes he prescribes for killing our sins, restoreing our soules to Gods love, and being with him to eternity.

The nature of Faith is to receive Christ; the ſincerity of it lies in the ſuitableneſſe of the act to the object: that we receive him as he is: Now in Chriſt there is ſomething eſſential to this act; that he be a Saviour, and our Saviour, &c. and there is ſomething makes unto the well-being, and fuller attaining of the end: The firſt are the objects of Faith it ſelf, as 'tis of abſolute neceſſity to ſalvation: The ſecond ſort are, the objects of Faith, as it is ſtrong, and makes to the well-being of a Chriſtian. All that is eſſential to Chriſt, as a Saviour, and Redeemer, is to be believed by him, that will approve himſelf a true believer. And thus to receive Chriſt as the eternal Son of God, made man, the Redeemer of the world, ruling us upon the right of Redemption, juſtifying us before God, bringing us to God, and intereeding for us: And thus Chriſt muſt be received according to his Offices, and as thoſe uſes for which he is given to the ſoul, do import and imply.

For the application of this point.

Firſt, let us begin with thoſe that our buſineſſe at preſent doth not mainly lye on. Muſt men *walk in Chriſt as they have received him?* What ſhall wee ſay to thoſe that *have not, will not receive him?* ſtop us at the door, that we can't bring in the

Doctrine

Doctrine of Christ; that will not *receive the principles of Christ*. How can we bring them, and build them up, that will not ſuffer the *Foundation* to be laid, the ſeed to be received? Haſt thou not received Chriſt? Then thou haſt refuſed Chriſt, been a deſpiſer of the Goſpel of Chriſt, which will prove thy great condemnation. What is it for thee to hear the *Name*, and not to have the *Spirit* of Chriſt? Do not go upon *conjectures*: it's one thing to number thy ſelf with thoſe that are *Chriſtians*, as to *outward appearance*, and another thing to *open thy heart*, and deliver up thy ſelf to Chriſts Government, and as a loſt ſinner, to receive him to thoſe ends a Saviour muſt be received. And remember, this was no ſmall Work, God's ſending Chriſt into the World; no ſmall thing to fetch thee from Hell and Satan, to waſh guilty ſouls from all their ſins, and to bring them to everlaſting glory. If theſe great things be rightly underſtood and believed by thee, if Chriſt be underſtood well as Chriſt, it muſt be done with a wakened, humbled, ſelf-reſigning heart, making the greateſt matter in the World of theſe things: Hath thy ſoul been ſeriouſly taken up about thy own recovery? And haſt thou received Chriſt as a man that was ready to be damned? as one that had a load on his ſoul heavier than all the Mountains of Earth, to eaſe and deliver him? As one that was under the frowns of God, in an eſtate of enmity, receives reconciliation? Haſt thou received Chriſt, as if thou hadſt received Heaven in him? Believe it, theſe are great tranſactions, and will affect thy heart; and it is not a

ſleepy

sleepy or *jesting* matter thus to receive Christ. Consider what it is to receive Christ.

1. If you have received Christ, you have received the great *Reconciler*, that binds up the broken-hearted, quiets those that tremble under the threatnings of God, for fear he should forsake, and cast them off for ever.

2. If thou hast received Christ, thou hast received a perfect *enmity* to *all sin*, that will never let thee *rest* in sin but be perswading thee from it, and conflicting in thee against sin in thy soul: If thou hast received Christ, thou hast not received a friend for sin, that will plead for, or give thee leave to commit sin: but one, that though he bear with thee in thy weakness, yet abominates thy sin. If thou hast received a Lord and Master to rule, to be consented and subjected to him, and to be ruled by none but in subordination to him, who will break those in pieces that refuse his Government. *Obedience*, and not *verbal Profession*, is the thing he requires. Hast thou entertained Christ to be the Master of thy words, thoughts and deeds, whose Government thou livest under, more than under any in the world?

3*dly*. If you have received Christ, you have then received the beginning of felicity and full contentment to your soules; having found none in your sins, you have it discovered to you where it is: therefore with gladness you go on: and so far as you

you have hopes of attaining it, ſo far you have great contentment, &c.

4*thly*, In a word, if you have received Chriſt, you have fallen out with ſin; ſubjected pleaſures, profits and honors to him; and you have received his Spirit, and this Spirit hath made you new, and maintains a War within you againſt the fleſh, &c.

If this be not thy caſe, Oh that thou kneweſt what a caſe thou art in! For then

1. What the better art thou for all his blood ſhed as yet, if thou wert this day to dye? What would Chriſts blood do to the cleanſing and ſaving of thy ſoul?

2. How canſt thou look thy ſins in the face, and think on what thou haſt done and art? How canſt thou look inward into thy defiled heart, and not tremble, when thou haſt no more ſhelter from the wrath of God?

3*dly*, How canſt thou look God in the face, who is a hater of ſin? How canſt thou read his Attributes, think on his Threatnings, &c.

4. How canſt thou think to have any duty accepted, any prayer heard, or rewarded? &c.

5. How

5. How canſt thou think on the day of Judgement, on the time when thou muſt receive thy final ſentence, if thou haſt not received Chriſt? Oh what a thing is a Chriſtleſs heart! &c.

Q. What ſhall I do that I may receive Chriſt?

A. 1. Till Chriſt be thine, and hath brought peace from Heaven to thy ſoul, let no peace be there to keep him out: I do not ſay overwhelm thy ſelf with ſorrow; but let ſorrow dwell there, and let holy cares and ſolicitouſneſs about thy ſpiritual ſtate be there till Chriſt come and quiet, and reconcile thee to God.

2. Read and believe the Goſpel, ſee there what Chriſt is, and thy neceſſity of him: *Believing* will open the door to *entertaining* him; *aſſent* will procure thy *conſent*.

3. Keep up no Idol in thy heart againſt him: Turn out that that keeps out Chriſt. How dear ſoever it ſeems now, at laſt thou wilt ſee it more neceſſary to detect, than keep it.

I come now to exhort all poor weak Chriſtians, that they would make after confirmation, and grow to a greater meaſure in Grace, as they have received Chriſt. It is not enough to be *conceited* that you have been converted; and it will not be enough to the aſſurance of your converſion,

ſion, or ſafety of your ſouls, that you think you are converted and ſit down there: He that is content with the opinion he hath Grace, therefore deſires to have no more, becauſe the promiſe of ſalvation is made to the *Truth of Grace*, it's a ſign he never had Grace; *ſtrength in Grace*, is your own felicity, 'tis part of your happineſs: Your eternal happineſs will partly conſiſt in your *perſonal perfection*; and without perſonal perfection, all heavenly glory will not be a perfect felicity. If you have fixed your Anchor in God's Promiſes, this engages you to look up, make after, and proceed, &c.

Take theſe Motives.

1. Conſider, there is the ſame reaſon to move thee to grow and proceed, as there was to move thee to thy firſt beleeving. Why did you become Chriſtians, but becauſe of the neceſſity of the riches and excellencies of Chriſt, and that there was better things in Chriſt, than in the World? And are they not ſo ſtill? Is the caſe changed? If Chriſtianity was reaſonable then, it is reaſonable now; if it was neceſſary to begin, it is neceſſary to hold on; and proceed in your Race, till you have obtained the Crown.

2. Your receiving Chriſt eſſentially, contains in

in it an obligation to proceed and go further, actually to trust and obey him, whom you have taken for your Lord and Saviour from the very offices and relations of Christ received.

If I be a Father, where is my fear? If I bee a Master where is my Honour? If I be a Saviour, where is your Confidence in me, submission, to my saving-work, Obedience to my healing-Precepts? If I be your Lord and Master, why do not you learn of me as your Master, &c.

Your first Covenant engages you to proceed in fulfilling the things promised in your Covenant, &c, Better not to have promised to be his people, than to promise and break this promise. The very *Mercies* also you received from him, pardoning your former sin, entertainment in his Church, and all the blessing there found, are as so many obligations to proceed.

3. Ever since we came home to Christ, we have had an addition of Reasons, besides the first Reason we had to believe: Every day brings in new, &c. Certainly if a little were desirable, more were more desirable: If the people that stood afar off, and never tried what Christ and Grace is, were bid to *come in*, those that have tryed and tasted, are bound to proceed much more: You have the Spirit of God, experiences of his love, tasted the bitterness of sin, have had some trial of the truth of such things of which we speak, when others

thers have *eyes*, and *see not*, &c. and will you turn back that have tasted? *&c.*

4. Consider how much hath been lost upon many a soul for want of care to take rooting, and to proceed? How much labour of the Ministry, mercies of God, pains and care of their own? I speak of those that have seemed sincere, not indeed so; that have many times comforted the hearts of their Ministers and Friends, and have had some kind of comfort to themselves in that taste they have had of the good word of God. How many times hath the Preacher been gladded to see such a one come to him, seemingly with a broken heart, seeming to set themselves in the way of life? yet the flesh prevailed for want of confirmation. How many yeares have some spent in duty, in hearing, prayer, gracious society, profession of Religion? yet afterwards the world hath drown'd all. What cause have you to see you lose not the thing you have wrought?

5. Consider how much of the works of your own salvation when you are converted, is yet undone. Though you are sure your conversion is true, how many temptations to resist, enemies to conquer, duties to perform, and Heaven to be taken upon all those terms,

as

as is the tenour of your Christianity! therefore you had need to stand fast, and having done all, to stand; you had need not onely to believe, but to wait and be patient in believing, and to proceed in the way you have chosen.

6. The want of strength and building up, makes the lives of many full of lamentable languishing weaknesses, scandals unto others, pain, calamity and trouble to themselves. How long in healing? And how much smart and pain, while the fruit of their own folly is cured? How little, and how frequently do temptations prevail? And hence as in a wilderness, they are going one step forward, another backward, no evident keeping in God, and all through the fruit of their own languishing weakness; the fruits of the sins of Professors have been such, that it should make you do all you can possible to escape the troubles at home, and reproaches abroad.

7. A life of spiritual weakness is usually a burden unto him that hath it, it doth not onely occasion his falling into sinne, and so renewes the wounds of his soul, but is a constant burden to him; not that any measure of Grace is troublesome, but

but that which consists with so great a measure of remaining corruption, this is the burden: sickness is burdensome though there be life. Me thinks you should not then be reconciled to your fears: you should methinks see so great difference between the sick and well, that for your own peace sake you should seek after confirmation: Every duty they do is their pain, which is anothers pleasure: prayer, &c. their burden: sometimes tired, wearied, dull, &c. presently overwhelmed with temptation: every duty is a grievance to them, through the weakness of their grace and their corruption.

8. Christians that are weak and not confirmed, lose abundance of the fruit of Gods Ordinances that are improved by others: how many a truth that tasts exceeding sweet to others, hath no great relish to them, nor growth by it! A healthful man hath more relish in ordinary fare then a sick person in varieties: the full stomack loaths the Honey-comb.

9. The weak and unconfirmed Christian is unprofitable, comparatively unto others; not that the Church would wish the weakest member out, but comparatively, unconfirmed Christians are very unprofitable unto others, like little children in the family, that must be looked to, make work for a great many more about them. What doth a sick person? but the work of others is to feed, support and be a help to him. The Church of God hath need of strong Christians that can pray in faith, fervencie for others, and you can scarcely pray for your selves. Consider when the Church needs a great deal of help, will you sit down with low attainments and little things, when so many hundreds about you need so great assistance?

10. Weak persons are many times the troublers and very dangers of the Church; many calamities have been occasioned by them. The sins of Professors have occasioned the displeasure of God on the Church: their Errors hindred truth and made divisions. When Christians have not so much strength as to know truth from error, that hearkens to every one that speaks with likeness: What have these Christians done in the Church? What mercies have been driven away so far, that I think the Church of God, since the Apostles days till now, hath suffered more by the sins of Professors, then the malice of their enemies. And how canst thou expect God will save thy soul, when thou hast set the Church on fire, and been so great hinderance to others, that many should perish occasionally by thy example? &c. The greatest sufferings of the Church have come from the miscarriages of the Church.

11. Such have been the great dishonourers of Christ; and the graces of ancient Christians, the glory of their profession: their charity, self-denial, heavenly-mindedness, patience, &c. preached the Gospel to the world more effectually then ever their words could do. God expects your lives should be a considerable means for the conversion of wicked men: the same God that hath commanded Ministers to teach others by their doctrine, hath commanded you should live for the conversion of the world; that your zeal, humility, patience, charity, self-denial, should win souls to God. And if it be a sin to give over preaching when we may, surely so to give over living, &c.

If woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel, then woe unto you if by your lives you preach not the Gospel. How many sinners have you about you, and how do you wrong and rob the ungodly of that Ordinance God hath appointed for their conversion and salvation? You are the persons that take the bread out of their mouths, the means that should save them out of their hands, while you deny them one of the commanded means of salvation, *i. e.* the *eminent example of your lives*: And if it be so great a sin to stop Preachers mouths, how great a sin to neglect this Ordinance? Nay, are you not a dishonour to the Church? Is it not because of Professors ill lives, that the prophane deride Religion, while they see not that glory in it that should over-power an unbeleeving and denying soul, and should indeed effectually manifest its excellency? Are these the Professors, that are proud, stubborn, passionate, censorious, self-conceited, contemptuous, and envious as any others? I know the world is apt enough to slander, and the Servants of God bear a world of unjust reproaches: but oh that there were not this occasion, &c.

12. Those that are not confirmed and established in grace, the Devil, when he hath prevailed by a temptation on themselves, can easily make them his Instruments to draw and tempt others from their duty, to discourage them in their Religion, and to do that mischief in the world he hath done, by temptation on their own soul. 'Tis ordinary for Satan to make use of lapsed, distempered Christians to be the instruments of his temptations to those that are better, &c. An honest Christian

will not ſo eaſily hearken to a drunkard, ſwearer, as to a profeſſor he had good thoughts off, *Gal.* 2. 13.

13. For want of ſtrength and eſtabliſhment in grace, poor weak Chriſtians are a very great encouragement to the carnal hopes of wicked men. I think ſcarce any thing in the world hinders our preaching more then this; when the wicked ſee thoſe that make the greateſt profeſſion no better then themſelves, and in ſome things worſe, this hardens him againſt all the convictions that can be brought againſt him: tell him he cannot be ſaved without converſion, he looks upon profeſſors, ſees them contentious, worldly, peeviſh, paſſionate, *&c.* ſees ſome ſin or other, this makes him think he is as well as they: muſt there be ſo much ado to bring men to this ſtate? Is this the difference? *&c.*

14. Methinks it ſhould be ſome trouble to an honeſt heart, that yet we muſt be ſo like to the children of the wicked one: and the weakeſt chriſtians, are the likeſt to the wicked: I do not mean weakneſs in gifts, or knowledge, *&c.* but a weakneſs in practical ſaving knowledge, love of God, ſelf-denial, mortification, heavenly-mindedneſs, *&c.* they that are in theſe the weakeſt Chriſtians, are the next and likeſt to the wicked: And doth not this grieve thee, that though thou art not a child of the Devil, thou art ſo like one? We ſhould not be conformed to the world, nor like to them in any thing, no not in outward vanities: but to imitate the faſhion of the world, as to inward corruptions, to go in their garb when a palpable vanity, to have ſo much of their pride, peeviſhneſs, malice,

lice, worldlineſs, oh look upon thy heart with humiliation.

15. Conſider what a dangerous and lamentable ſtanding thoſe have that be not eſtabliſhed, *&c.* you ſtand, but it is as un-rooted plants or trees that ſtand ſhaking in the wind: beholders are alwayes looking when they fall: you ſtand, but it is as a ſick man, wavering, reeling, like *Lots wife*, looking back, and alwayes upon every occaſion ready to repent: You have been Believers, little things perplex and trouble you; little tribulations and afflictions diſcompoſe and diſturb you; little temptations make you queſtion the Scripture, the Providence of God, his love and care of his people, and the great foundations of Religion: Foundations ſeem to ſhake, becauſe you are ſhaking and tottering, *&c.* And what is like to become of ſuch a ſoul? If thou ſtand ſhaking under ſmall temptations, for want of confirmation, what wilt thou do when a Papiſt, or Quaker, *&c.* ſhall ſo ſpeak concerning Religion, which thou art not able to anſwer? and ſo the ſureſt foundation ſeems nothing when thou haſt ſo weak hold: our greateſt afflictions, next to the miſery of the ungodly, is to think of our weak ones, what will become of them: and verily we do expect a conſiderable part of our congregation ſhould be carried away: thoſe that are *Chriſtians and know not why*, yet have not humility enough to make uſe of others, and to keep cloſe to thoſe that ſhould aſſiſt them. Remember when you ſee ſuch times, when ſeducers are able to ſay the worſt, ſhall make the ſtrongeſt aſſaults on the weak ones, how many will be like to fall?

Again ſickneſs, death, dying times will come, when you ſhall find a little grace will not eaſily do your work; and though you periſh not, yet you may faint, and to your ſorrow finde the want of confirmation. You cannot but know how the ſtrongeſt are put to it in trying houres, or at death. Will ſlack and unſetled hopes of another life, ſuch diſtempered hearts fight and encounter with ſuch tryals? Never think of dying comfortably, if you follow not after confirming grace.

16. It ſhould humble you the more, that you have been ſo long, ſo many years in the School of Chriſt, and love God, *&c.* no better: Should not you in this Apprenticeſhip have learned better your Religion, and been teachers of others, when perhaps, if in the principles you are aſſaulted, you will ſhow your weakneſs as ſoon as any May not Chriſt ſay, *Have I been ſo long time with you*, and yet have you *known*, *liv'd*, &c. no *better*? reached no higher, attained no further? weaklings ſtill? Nay conſider in this time what advantage have you had for growth? A tree planted on a barren wilderneſs may not grow ſo much as in a fruitful place: but you have had the plenty and power of the Ordinances of God, the choiceſt of the means and helps of ſalvation.

17. Conſider, the nature of true grace tends to this: will you croſs the nature of it? ſhall we be ſuch weaklings in Religion, which croſſe ſo the nature of *grace*? for *grace*, the more its exerciſed, the more it *encreaſes*.

18. Heaven

18. Heaven it ſelf is perfection, and the work of a Chriſtian is to preſs towards heaven, and therefore 'tis to preſs towards perfection. You ſhould make towards the end in a manner and way that is ſutable to the end. Perſons that enjoy ſo much already, and hope for ſo much greater, ſhould not put off God with ſuch little things.

19 Little grace ſhall have but little glory. You know not how great a difference there is between the leaſt and higheſt in the Kingdome of God. Nay 'tis not only for a Chriſtian to deſire to be glorified, but to enjoy the higheſt degree in glory: to ſerve God with the beſt, and improve his Talent to the utmoſt, that his heavenly reward may be according. A Chriſtian ſhould not ſlight it when 'tis tendred to him and in his eye.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I know I have attained this confirming grace?*

A. Theſe ſigns following ſhew a Chriſtian confirmed and ſtrong in grace, which I will name, that you may know what to aim at, and what to deſire. There is not ſo great a difference between a King and a Beggar, between the greateſt health, and ſickleſt man, as between a ſtrong uſeful Chriſtian, and a poor languiſhing ſoul, *&c.*

1. A confirmed Chriſtian is one *that can reſiſt many ſubtil and ſtrong temptations*, not only a ſingle temptation, but when Satan aſſaults on every ſide, with errors on both extreames, with importunities of ſeveral parties, with temptations of proſperity offered, of adverſity felt or feared; ſtrong

temptations that seem to lay a necessity of yielding on a weakling, that makes him say, *I* must do it to save my liberty, family, life, *&c.* A strong christian can say, there is no necessity: he can make light of those temptations that seem to be a necessity to other persons: he can confute a subtil Sophister, and deal with a cunning Adversary; Satan cannot so easily go beyond and out-wit him.

2. He can do great, excellent and useful work, is serviceable to God if he have opportunity in business of greatest consequence he doth not serve God only in some little and inconsiderable things, but in his place sets himself to the work of God, doth the great work of his Majesty faithfully: The service of God to him is more easie and delightful, as to go ten miles is more easie to the healthful, then one to a sickly person: he can go through Gods service with pleasure, ease and delight, without tyring, fainting, sitting down, or giving over.

3. He can digest the hard Truths and Providences of God, that are ready to puzzle, perplex, and overset the stomack of a weak christian: He hath laid his foundation, to which he reduces all things of difficulty, and by the help of those great truths he hath received, he can easily see through the difficulties of all that are yet before him. He can tell how to reconcile those things in Scripture that seem

ſeem contradictions: where he meets with a difficulty, he can eaſily diſcern the cauſe is in himſelf, and that there is an undoubted way of reconciling them, though he hath not attained to it. He can eaſily quiet his ſoul under the moſt difficult providences, and interpret them ſo as is conſiſtent with the truths of God, which muſt expound them: he reconciles providence with providence, and providence with Scripture: whereas a weak chriſtian is ready to ſay, *A hard ſaying, who can bear this and that?* And 'tis the difficulty of theſe kinds of Truths, that make ſo many turn their Religion, becauſe not able to digeſt the hardeſt Truths of God. Croſs providences makes them queſtion Gods love, *&c.*

4. He is one that can exerciſe various graces, without ſetting one againſt another, deſtroying or contradicting one another. He can do many works, believe many truths, perform many duties at once. He can rejoyce and ſorrow at once, and make his ſorrow a help to his joy, and his joy a help to his ſorrow, and ſo exerciſe both in that nature as will not directly hinder or weaken one another. He can tell how in ſuch a time as we are in to rejoyce, yet to be humble: to be caſt down at Gods feet in the ſenſe of the ſins we have committed, and of Gods diſpleaſure, *&c.* yet to rejoyce in the mercies we have, and do expect to poſſeſs. He doth not look all upon ſin, all upon affliction, or all upon mercy: but can

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eye every thing, and give every thing its part: can exerciſe graces methodically, give truths and providences their proper place in his meditations and affections: and this makes his life orderly, beautiful, regular and uſeful: whereas a weak Chriſtian, let him ſet himſelf againſt one temptation, he is taken in another: if he humble himſelf in ſoul, he can do nothing but humble, weep, grieve, fear, and be ready to caſt away all comfort, all ſence of the love of God: if he ſet himſelf to the conſideration of the grace of Chriſt, he is apt to forget Humiliation, and to be puffed up with ſpiritual pride, *&c.* Thus he hath not skill, ſtrength and ability to carry on all the whole work of grace together.

5. A ſtrong Chriſtian ſinks not under thoſe burdens that would preſſe down and overwhelm a weak Chriſtian: he can bear heavy burdens, and more eaſily away with them, making it a recreation to bear ſome things that another would ſink under and cannot bear. 'Tis thy weakneſſe that makes thee make ſuch a ſtir, when God layes on thee perſonal, family publick afflictions, that makes thee ſhrink under them: ſtrength of grace would enable thee to ſee God and glory in the midſt of them, and to ſay, *all ſhall work for my good*: it would enable thee to get advantage, and be bettered by them. Hadſt thou ſtrength enough to improve them, thou wouldſt take comfort from them, and ſupport thy ſelf under them: but when thou haſt not ſtrength enough to underſtand Gods meaning, to ſee the duty then called for, to improve all for God, to do that ſervice to God thou ſhouldſt do

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in such a condition, no wonder if thou have not grace to support and comfort thee in that condition. Whereas the confirmed Christian by strong faith, love & patience can carry great burthens, &c.

6. *Is helpful to many, and troublesome unto few.* They are the useful persons in the family and place where they live: it is they can counsel others in their doubts, help them in their straits; that can bear up the weak when ready to sink, that can hold others by the arm when not able to go upright; that tends Gods little ones; and if it were not for these, what would Gods little ones do? They are so furnished with patience, which God hath given them for the use of the weak ones in his family, and though they are troublesome, or do that which might be a disturbance to them, they will not thrust them out; it is they that comfort the feeble, support, provide for, strengthen, and confirm the rest; and were it not for these, what back-sliding hearts should we have? &c. And they are comparatively troublesome to few, (though, while corruption cleaves to them, they shall sometimes:) It is not they that are censuring their brethren, that are stirring up division, and make all that feud that is in the Church: if they might be hearkened unto and regarded, there would be quietness and composure (for if ever there be peace, it will be by the strong ones:) But weak ones in grace are the burdens and troublers of the family: you may know they are the weak ones in Gods house, in that they are those that are always crying, complaining, making fire-work in the family, back-biting, censuring their brethren, quarrelling

quarrelling with one or other, &c. theſe peeviſh, troubleſome ſouls are the weak ones, &c.

7. The ſtrongeſt in grace are the beſt able to ſtand, work, and ſuffer alone. Though in duty they ſhould not be alone when they can have ſociety; and though the reſt are moſt humble, therefore are ſenſible they have need of others; and will not throw away any of their helps, yet if all forſake them, they will ſtand to it ſtill: they go not to heaven meerly for company ſake: they be not chriſtians meerly becauſe ſuch and ſuch are chriſtians: If all the world forſake Chriſt, they will ſtick to him, unleſs Chriſt leave them to their own weakneſs. But the weak Chriſtian hath a great deal more need of comfort and ſupport, and lives a more dependent life: they cannot ſtand, work, ſuffer alone: if their Miniſter fall, they fall: if their Relations change, they change: if there be not ſome-body at hand to confute an Adverſary, they yield: if there be not ſome-body to keep life and warmth, they grow cold in every duty: in affliction they can ſtep on no longer then led by the hand, &c. have Chriſtians to ſupport, and to quiet, and moderate their paſſions, and to teach them the Doctrine of patience: they can hold up no longer then they are refreſhed with cordials: What would become of you, ſhould God let you ſtand by your ſelves? &c.

8. The ſtrong Chriſtian is one that can beſt live without creatures upon God alone (and a weak chriſtian is one that hath moſt need of the creature

ture, and can leaſt live upon God alone) under the cenſures of the godly, frowns of the wicked, without riches, honours, pleaſures; can have quietneſs and contentment in God, whether he have any thing or nothing, wherever he is, &c. The more neceſſity thou art in of having ſomething beſides God for thy conſolation, the more weak thou art: there muſt be comfortable proviſion in the family, health, eaſe, liberty; there muſt be ſupply: I know not how to be poor, diſgraced, &c. this impatient ſoul is the feeble ſoul: Impatience is nothing but the fruit of weakneſs. The ſtrong chriſtian can live upon God alone: therefore if men make as if they were undone, if loſt in their eſtates, 'tis a certain ſign of a lamentable weakneſs of a ſick ſoul.

9. That is the beſt and ſtrongeſt chriſtian, and moſt confirmed in grace, who is moſt employed and abides in the love of God, in love to God: That hath the fear of God, but goes beyond fear, and loves moſt, and abides moſt in the love of God: That makes it his great buſineſs to feed upon, and ſtudy the love of God to him, and to return love to him again. The more Gods love is on thy heart, and the more thou liveſt in the fruit of that love, the ſtronger chriſtian. But he that lives moſt by a kind of conſtraining fear, though he may be ſincere, he is but weak: where there is nothing but fear and no love, there is no ſincerity; but where there is ſome little meaſure of love, fear is ſuch a tyrant that it will many times cloud it, ſo that almoſt all his life ſeems to be moved

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and managed by fear: and in this there is much lothneſs and unwillingneſs, and they had rather do otherwiſe then they do: according to the meaſure of love is the ſtrength of grace.

10. He is the ſtrongeſt chriſtian that hath moſt pure and moſt univerſal love to others, that can love all men, even an enemy, with true, unfeigned love, even with ſuch love as belongs to a chriſtian: that can love every chriſtian, and not a party only, with the pure and fervent love which belongs to Believers: that can love every child of God, and not thoſe only that are of his opinion, or have done him good, but all becauſe they are children of God, with a ſincere and ſpecial hearty love. That is the weak chriſtian that picks and chuſes, that is ſtaggering when he comes to loving an enemy: that takes in thoſe that agree with him in judgement, and makes thoſe almoſt only the object of his love; that would confine his affections to ſome narrow ſociety, ſome little ſect, party, or parcel of Believers, and cannot love chriſtians as chriſtians: And hence it is, diviſion is the effect of enmity, or of weakneſs in grace, for want of the univerſality of love. I would make no queſtion to prognoſtick the healing of all diviſions within this Nation, could I but advance all that are concerned in it to the right temper of chriſtian love. 'Tis the weak children in Chriſts family that falls out, when we have not enough love to reach to all, and to love a chriſtian as a chriſtian, &c.

Queſt. *What muſt be done by thoſe that are converted to keep them where they are, to help them unto growth,*

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to make them better, to further their confirmation, to secure their salvation, that they may after all attain the Crown?

Answ. I shall leave with you twenty Directions; and as many as there are, there are not more then you must practice; and take them as if they were the last Directions I should give you; and take them as practicals, not as notionals, that you must live upon as long as you live.

1. See that the foundation be soundly laid in your head and heart in matters of your Religion. In your head, *i. e.* that you well understand what Religion is, what the Christian Religion is: what God is: what it is for God to be yours, in his Attributes and Relations unto you: what he is and will be unto you: what you are and must be unto him: what sin is, how odious, wherein its evil consists: what is sin, and what not: what sin hath done in the world, and what state it hath brought transgressors into: what Christ is, what he hath done for mans recovery and redemption: what he hath wrought, gives and offers to the world: The end and design of God in the work of mans redemption: The tender of the Gospel-Covenant of grace, freeness, largeness, and excellency of the grace of this Covenant: The end of our Religion: the everlasting glory that is revealed in the Gospel, what it is, how sure, and how great. When you understand these things, get a sound and radicated belief concerning the Truths of the holy Scripture revealing all these things: And think it not enough that the Scripture is true, or that you

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are reſolved ſo to believe, but get the beſt grounds for your belief, be well eſtabliſhed on thoſe grounds: Read the Scripture much, till you are acquainted with, and reliſh the matter and language, and feel the power, untill all be delightful to your ſouls in reading. And be not aſhamed to underſtand the Fundamentals: look to your Catechiſmes: The fundamentals of Religion you muſt underſtand and receive. And when you have got them into your head, be ſure you get them into your heart, and never think any truth received as it ought, till it hath done ſome ſpecial work on your heart; till you believe that God is Almighty, Juſt, Holy, &c. and all the Attributes of God have made their holy impreſſion on your heart: that the ſanctifying knowledge of God hath warmed your affections, captivated your ſouls, that God be inthron'd in your hearts by the belief and knowledge of your minds: Know your ſelves ſo as to be humble: know *Chriſt* ſo as he may be ſweet unto you, and exalted by you: ſet up *Chriſt* in your ſouls neareſt to your hearts: know ſin ſo as to hate it, &c. 'Tis the entertainment of the good things of the Goſpel by the will that is the principal part of your Religion. 'Tis a matter of lamentable conſequence in all your lives, when there is not a ſound work at the heart: how little life will there be from any truth in reading or hearing? The Fundamentals of Religion muſt be ſo received, as not only to have an old heart mended, but a new heart made. Thus underſtand, believe, and give up thy heart to that thou believeſt and underſtandeſt.

2. Know

2. Know and remember the work of your Salvation, muſt be as long as you live; and that you have never done, till you have done living. I give this direction becauſe I find ſomething in Chriſtianity, the remainds of Carnality is apt to hinder, &c. and ſome profeſſors, when converted, they are reconciled to God, and ſafe, &c. but there's a great deal to be done after, &c.

3. Underſtand well wherein it is your confirmation, ſtability rootedneſs, and growth in Religion doth conſiſt. The chief part of your growth in Grace is not to know more things then you knew before: but to grow in the knowledge, beliefe, entertainment, and improvement of the ſame truths, that at firſt you did receive: (not that you may not or ſhould not know more, for the clear knowledge of the fundamentals guide you unavoydably to the ſight of many other truths which a darker knowled ge of thoſe fundamentals will not diſcover to you.) It is not additional to your former knowledge, but the clearer knowing, ſounder believing, heartier entertaining and improving of the truths you knew at firſt as the health of a man conſiſts not in having every day variety of food, but in the partaking and digeſtion of the ſame food, that's fitteſt for him: get but a more perfect conviction, or concoction of what you knew before, and this is your growth. You may grow in the knowledge of Gods attributes by knowing them more clearly, orderly, diſtinctly, ſatisfactorily and believingly then before. There is a word of difference in the manner of knowledge, between a dark and clear knowing things: grow in greater love to them,

and greater skill in entertainment, improvement, and practise of them.

4. Grow downward in humility and inward in the knowledge of your selves: and above all, maintain a constant abhorrence and jealousie of the sin of pride: grow in humility, and fly from man; keep a constant apprehension of your unworthiness and weakness, of the odiousness and danger of sin, of spiritual pride: (we called because exercised about spiritual things) of being pufft up with pride of any thing in your selves, of being too confident in your selves: be low in your own, and expect not, nor desire others good thoughts of you, Humility lies not in humility of opinion, speech, garbe, or carriage: but in opposition to high thoughts of our own parts, gifts, godliness, when we think of these above their worth: still remember *Sal.* 25. *Pro.* 26. 19. *Isai* 57. 15 *Ioh.* 22. 29. as ever you would grow in grace and be confirmed Christians, keep a low esteem of your selves, be mean in your own eies, be content to be mean in others, and harken not to secret flatterers that would puff you up. Take heed of any thing that would puff you up, *&c.*

5. You must understand that you are Disciples in Christs school, where Ministers are his teachers and guides: the Ordinances his means for his peoples good, and the Scripture, the Book you must learn: therefore keep in this order: keep under these guides, commit your souls to those that are faithful, and fit for souls to be intrusted with: and when you have done with humble submissiveness to their teaching, keep in this school under those officers

ficers in their Diſcipline, and dwell in the Catholick Church and Communion of Saints, and underſtand the duty of Paſtors and people, *Heb* 13. 17. 18. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12. *obey them that have the rule over you.* If God had ſeen the poor Chriſtians ſufficient to ſupport themſelves, he would never have made it the duty of all to be marſhalled and rank'd in ſeveral ſchools, ranks, orders, and all to walk in this order to Heaven. If you withdraw from under Chriſts officers and ordinances, you are in danger of being ſnatcht up as ſtraglers.

Q. What ſhall we do? who ſhall we take for our guides, if God take them away? *&c.*

A. Tis not the denyal of publick liberty that loſes that relation between a Paſtor and his Flock, nor any word from man ſhould cauſe a poor ſoul to truſt it ſelf for guidance of Salvation to one that is not able: a mans ſoul is not to be hazarded upon damnation, by being deprived of the officers and ordinances of Chriſt, and caſt upon the conduct of a blind guide, meerly for the pleaſuring of a meer man.

6. Be ſure you underſtand the nature of Church union, and neceſſity of maintaining it, and abhorr all wayes that are truly Schiſmatical, that would rent and divide the Church of Chriſt. As you muſt not under pretence of avoiding ſchiſme, caſt your ſoul upon apparent hazard of damnation, ſo you muſt maintain the neceſſity of Church Union and Communion: when Chriſts members walk in Communion with Chriſts members, ſuppoſing that which is ſingular to the generality of judicious men. Take heed of any thing that would

withdraw you from the Communion of the generality of thoſe that are found in the faith. Take heed of withdrawing from the main body of beleevers. Chriſt is the Head of his Church, he will never condemn his Church; walk in thoſe ſubſtantials Chriſts Church hath walked in Diviſions among Chriſtians is a ſin God hath deſcribed as odious and tending to the ruine of Chriſtians. Be very ſuſpicious of any that would draw you from the main body of beleevers, and keep Communion with the univerſal Church of Chriſt, with the generality of the godly in love and affection, &c.

7. Be ſure your own hearts and ways be the matter of your daily ſtudy; and when hypocrites have their work abroad, let yours be much at home; while they make it their buſineſs to cenſure this and that man, let the main of your buſineſs be in dreſſing the inward of your own hearts, in keeping all right between God and you. Obſerve your hearts *inclinations*; if any inordinate inclination after any thing, ſet a ſpecial guard: mark which way your *thoughts* go, that you may know your *inclinations* by your *thoughts*. In an eſpecial manner, preſerve *tenderneſs* of *Conſcience*, fear of *ſin*, loathfulneſs to diſpleaſe God, let *truth* have the maſtery, maintain ſuch a conſcience that dares not *ſin* to ſave your lives; be ſure you ſin not willfully, obey the light.

8. Be ſure to keep up continually a lively apprehenſion of the ſtate and place of your everlaſting happineſs, to live by faith upon the unſeen world. Know where your happineſs lyes, and what it is, that you grow not to carnal apprehenſions of your happineſs. Live upon Heaven, and let that be

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it that ſhall animate your faith to duty: and all that you may ſtill be weary of vexations, and ſenſible of the vanities here below: Let your converſation be above. Be confirmed in your apprehenſions of the certainty and excellency of eternal bleſſedneſs; grow more in Heavenly mindedneſs and in ſatisfaction of ſoul, in the hopes you have of theſe things.

9. Underſtand the nature, method, and power of temptations how to reſiſt them, and live in watchfulneſs. Be not a ſtranger to Satan and his methods of tempting, what you have to watch againſt and oppoſe, where you muſt be armed. Underſtand the nature of *Chriſtian watchfulneſs*; keep up a conſtant reſolution and courage in reſiſting, eſpecially the temptations you carry about with you, of your calling, conſtitution, company, and of the times; ſet them down, remember them, keep a ſpecial Obſervation of them all: and ſay, this and this it is I am in danger of; and 'tis my *integrity* and *ſalvation* that's in danger, and here place a ſpecial guard, and make it your buſineſs to reſiſt. The principal cauſe of Chriſtians negligence in this, is the ſecurity of their conſciences, and love of their ſins: did you know your danger, you would better look after your ſafety, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11.

10. Eſpecially underſtand how much the *fleſh* and *carnal ſelf* is an enemy to God and your ſouls: and how much you are engaged by the Chriſtian Covenant to live in a *warfare* againſt your ſelves, and againſt your fleſh. You muſt not think the life of ſelf-pleaſing is conſiſtent with Religion: un-

derſtand how you are bound to take the fleſh for your enemy, to watch againſt it, and to live in a continual combat with it, *Col.* 3. 5. The fleſh is your chiefeſt enemy: the very ſenſes themſelves are all grown inordinate, and the *work of faith* is very much ſeen in its exerciſe this way; if you get an opinion that you may eat, and drink, and cloath, *&c.* and do all things to gratifie your ſelves, *&c.* then no wonder if you find but little increaſe in ſpirituals, while you grow ſo carnal. Underſtand and practiſe the duty of *Self-denial*, *ſelf is the very heart of ſin*: read it not under pretence of *liberty* in *Religion*.

11. Give not way to a *formal*, *heartleſs*, *ſeeming Religiouſneſs*, *Cuſtomarineſs*, without the life: but keep your ſouls in a continual ſeriouſneſs and awakenedneſs about God, immortality, and your great concernments. If duty be dead, take heed leſt that incline you to a deadneſs in another, and ſo grow to a cuſtomary deadneſs. Take heed of ſpiritual ſlothfulneſs, that makes you keep your hands in your boſom, when you ſhould be doing for your ſouls: ſtir up to, and in duty, when you have but little time for life eternal: do not pray as if you prayed not, or hear as though you heard not: but when upon duty, doing Gods ſervice, do it with all the ſeriouſneſs and rigour you can; To grow lazie and negligent is the declining way: uſe ſuch conſiderations as may ſtir you up, *Rom.* 12. 11. *Tit.* 2. 14.

12. Remember always the worth of time, and greatneſs of your work, and therefore ſo value time, as not negligently or ſlothfully to loſe a moment: it will quickly be gone, and when you

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are at the laſt you will better know its worth: harken to no temptation that will draw you to any trifling, abuſing, waſting of your precious time, if thou haſt no argument againſt thy ſports, trifling pleaſures, &c. but this, It loſes my ime, take it for a greater argument then if it loſe thee thy money, friends, or any thing in the world: eſpecially value the precioueſt of your time, your youth, your morning hours, eſpecially the Lords day; loſe not any part of it, but improve it with your ſelves and families: loſe not a moment of the Lords day, nor any of thy precious time thou canſt ſpare & redeem: if thou haſt loſt any be humble for it, and be careful to redeem the reſt: look back, do you approve of the time that is paſt? could you not have ſpent it better? remember what you have loſt let that quicken you; look before you, remember what is to be done, and do that firſt which muſt be done, and then leave trifles to that time you haue to ſpare: it is ignorance & idleneſs, & not want of work, that makes any think they have time to ſpare. *Eph.* 5. 16. *Col.* . . 5

13. Make a careful choice of your company; you cannot travel well to Heaven alone, eſpecially when you may have company: thruſt not your ſelves into every company, *Eph.* 5. 7. converſe as much as you can with thoſe that will help you, that are warm when you are cold, knowing when you are ignorant, believing when you are doubtful, &c. eſpecially for your conſtant companions, live with thoſe that will be a frequent help to you: Maſters chuſe the beſt ſervants that fear God: ſervants, chuſe to live with thoſe that will help you in the fear of God: for Husbands and Wives make choice

of those that will intend upon Religion; take heed of being unequally yoaked, and of thinking to get well to Heaven, while you presume to unite your selves with those that with great advantage will hinder, not help your salvation.

14. Keep a constant guard upon the tongue, especially take heed of those common sins that disgrace hath not driven out of the world, but have got some kind of credit amongst some professors: namely idle talk that wastes precious time, makes us unfruitful to one another, backbiting especially, can they put but a Religious pretence upon it, or if they backbite those that differ in opinion. Remember that terrible passage, *Pro.* 18.21. *Ia.* 1.26. & 3.5,6. *Psal.* 39. & 35. 8. avoyd idle talk, backbiting *&c.* watch over your tongues: and if any are by nature addicted to a laxity of tongue, and multitude of words, there lies a double obligation on you in point of danger and necessity, above all others to keep a careful watch over your tongue, you should rather speak fewer words then others: and if you find your selves inclined to speak against any behind his back, reprehend your selves and avoid it.

15. Learn the holy skill of improving every condition that God shall cast you into; learn how to live to God in every condition: if you have skill and heart, there is advantage to be got by all; that prosperity may strengthen you in God, encourage you in his service, that adversity may wean you from the world, help you to repentance, raise you to God, and give you more then it took away. Know the danger and duty of every condition, study

dy

dy them before they com- upon you, that they do not ſurprize you: learn to know what's the danger, duty, and particular temptation of every condition, and in that condition you are moſt likely to expect a fall into: prepare for affliction as the common lott of the Saints, take it as no ſtrange thing when it overtakes you: know how to abound and how to want. A great deal of a Chriſtians ſafety and comfort lies on this, to ſtudy the temptation and duty of every condition before it come, that ſo you may have your remedy at hand, and fall to your work, and commit your ſelves to God.

16. Be as conſcionable and ſtrickt in the duties of your relations, & dealings with men, proportionably as in the duties of holineſs, more directly to be performed to God; make as much conſcience, care, ſtudy, diligence, about being juſt, that you wrong no man in buying or ſelling, as you do in duties of holineſs, hearing, praying, receiving. In your trading make conſcience of juſtice and faithfulneſs as well as in the worſhip of God, and in your own perſonal behaviour; in your calling be diligent, not ſlothful in buſineſs, &c. And ſo in the duties of your relations: Oh that Parents knew what a charge lies on them concerning the ſouls of their Children, &c. ſo Maſters, look to your ſervants, and be as conſcionable in doing your duty for their ſouls good, and being faithful to them, and compaſſionate over them, as in your duty to God: keep up family duties with life, ſeriouſneſs, diligence and vigor: the life of Religion in the world muſt be kept up very much in families.

17. Make it your ſtudy and care to do all the

good

good you can in the world, let doing good be the principal part of your buſineſs, think that the ſafeſt and happieſt life in which you can do greateſt good; ſuffer not opportunities to ſlip out of your hands; take them where you have them, and ſeek where you may have them; look not only where you may get good, but where you may have opportunities to do good to others: every Talent muſt be anſwered for; your knowledge, health, &c. uſe it as you will anſwer for it, and know 'tis one of the greateſt mercies in the world for God to give you hearts in doing good with that he hath given, *Heb.* 13. 16. not for applauſe, but be good Husbands for God, and conſider which way you may attain your ends beſt by what you give or do. Thus be rich in good works.

18 Live ſtill as before the living God, approve your hearts to him, as knowing you ſtand or fall unto his judgement. Avoid carefully all offences unto men, for the Lords ſake, and their conſcience ſake; take heed of ſcandal, and receive all the good from others you can, but ſtick not too much on mans approbation: diſregard not ſuſpitions or reproofs of Godly men, but make not mans praiſe to be any part of your reward; it is a ſmall thing for me to be judged of men. Be not much troubled at it if you cannot pleaſe all: the bawlings of the malicious ſhould not diſturb a ſoul that is quietly houſed with God: that ſoul is not well ſtabliſhed in faith that can be ſo diſturb'd and diſtempered by the wrath or words of malicious men. Remember God himſelf pleaſes not all; the moſt of the world are enemies to their Maker upon the account of his Holi-

Holineſs, Juſtice, &c. and canſt thou think to pleaſe all? withdraw from the world and your ſelves unto God, for the conſolation of his approbation, and for your felicity: this will ſave you from hypocriſie, and keep you from the temptations and vexations of the cenſorious world.

19. Be every day as ſerious in your preparation for death and judgement, as thoſe that are always certain that it will come, and know not the moment when it will come (*Matth.* 24. 49.) Uſe often to think ſeriouſly before-hand, what death is; what thoughts, what tryals death will put a man upon: what temptations uſually accompany our approaching death: what you ſhall moſt need at ſuch a time as that: what thoughts are likelieſt to poſſeſs you then: what you are likelieſt to wiſh for when you muſt needs die, about ſpending your time, expending your eſtate, converſing with others, &c. Ask your ſelves, what will I wiſh I had done or been when I come to die? Think what will be moſt dreadful to a dying man, for thus you have time to eſcape his judgement: will it not be to think on a life loſt in vanity, drench'd in worldlineſs, unreconciled to God, or at leaſt in utter uncertainty of his love? God hath not foreſhewed what will be a dying mans terror, to torment thee, but to get out that terror; that which will be moſt terrible at death, conquer and deſtroy it preſently. *They that were ready went in with the Bridegroom, and the door was ſhut;* (Matth. 25. 10.) Oh happy thou, if while the door is open thou be found ready to go in: woe, if when the door be ſhut, thou haſt thy preparation to make,

make, thy graces to ſeek. Bethink what you will either wiſh or fear when you come to dye, and when you will ſay, this ſhould have been done, *&c.* let it now be done.

20. Riſe ſpeedily after every fall by ſound repentance, and a freſh recourſe to the bloud of Chriſt, Covenant of Grace, and his interceſſion. Lie not ſecure in any ſin into which thou art lapſed: take heed of delaying and trifling, when thy particular repentance ſhould be exerciſed. Renew thy Covenant, and after thy rising deal faithfully with thy ſelf and God, favour not thy ſin, nor fleſh, go to the quick, leave no corruption at the bottom: If called to make reſtitution, to ſhame thy ſelf before men by confeſſion, ſtick not at it: take the plaineſt courſe, that is the way of God: And let not any thought of ſhame, diſhonour, or loſſe hinder it: for the more it coſts thee to riſe from ſin, the likelier 'tis thou art ſound in thy converſion, and the more comfort wilt thou have: otherwiſe the feares and paines of thy diſeaſe will be upon thee, when the thorough cure would have prevented it: quarrel not at any mans reproof, though they miſcarry in it, have mentioned thy faults with paſſion *&c.* take that which is good and be thankful. And after every fall ſit not down in perpetual diſtreſs, but, as Chriſt takes the *honour* of thy cure, take thou the *comfort* of thy cure when recovered. See thou art truly riſen by repentance and returned to him whom thou haſt diſhonoured.—— Thy care muſt be to ſee thou be ſincere in thy return, and then walk comfortably.

See

See that Satan make not thee walk ſo as to rob thee of thy comfort, and God of his honour.

Thus having given you twenty Directions, I ſhall reduce all to theſe eight Particulars.

1. Do not think ſtrength of grace will be got with eaſe: you muſt do that, that in other things is done for the attaining of ſtrength, increaſe and confirmation. A man cannot attain knowledge in Law, Phyſick, or any Art, without ſtudying, diligence, unwearied labour and patience, through that time that is neceſſary to attain it. Set your ſelves to the reading of the *Scripture*, and other good books, ſtudy good truths: think not to attain maſtery in a day: And if ever ſuch a conceit come in your minds, that you are ſtrong confirmed Chriſtians, do not eaſily entertain it: there muſt be time, induſtry and diligence: ordinarily ſuſpect the conceit you may have of ſtrength and confirmation; you muſt grow by degrees: Gods method is, to begin like a grain of *Muſtard-ſeed*: we are not born men: labour in the proper meanes with patience: infuſed gifts are given according to the manner of acquiring them: God gives as if our acquiſition did attain it: never think of having this without patience, labour and diligence.

2. Grow up in the Church of God, and under his Officers, and Ordinances, and among his people: Do not tranſplant your ſelves from the garden and vineyard of the Lord, if you will thrive: no proſpering in the Commons where weeds will choak, *&c.* Keep within the Church of God, in the communion of his People, among his Servants, under

der the guidance of his Miniſters, for that is the duty of Miniſters to bring up, train up, and help the weak ones, till they grow to be ſtrong: they are to be Gods Nurſes, and helpers of the weak in the Houſe of God: Do not think to proſper by breaking over the hedge, under pretence of any right of holineſſe whatſoever, following any party that would draw you to ſeparation.

3. Make it, amongſt others, the pricipal ſtudy of your lives, to *ſtudy the love of God in the Redeemer*, the nature of the new Covenant, and the infinite goodneſſe revealed in the face of a Mediator: how it was his deſign to attract the hearts of men to the love of God, by revealing his infinite love in the Redeemer, unto which end Chriſt came for, even to repreſent Gods goodneſſe in ſinners hearts, of their being reconciled to him, and raviſhing them with his love. Study the glory and raviſhing love of God, and unſpeakable goodneſſe in a Redeemer.

4. Live not by ſenſe, or upon worldly hopes, nor in the exerciſe of it: See that you live a mortified life: take heed of glutting your ſelves with creatures, or letting your hearts out to any creature, or letting any creature be to dear to you: live not too much on any ſenſible thing, or upon any worldly hopes or expectations. Shut your eyes to the world: let not your deſires run out to the world, and live as much as you can upon the world to come.

5. Let holy ſelf-ſuſpition alwayes make you fearful of temptation. and keep you out of the Devils way: Would you keep your ſtanding, grow better and ſtrong in grace? let not the pride of your hearts,

hearts, or confidence of your ſtrength, make you meet among any unlawful communion, ſee any inticing ſpectacle, or thruſt your ſelves upon temptation: you are never ſafe if you thruſt your ſelves upon temptation: think with your ſelf, my weakneſs is great, I muſt not gaze upon this inticing object, leſt my heart take fire; I am not ſo ſtrong as to be able to ſtand againſt ſuch, *&c.*

6. When you cannot attain unto that heat of internal affection you would, *be ſure you walk uprightly with God*: ſin not wilfully: keep your garments clean: ſet his Law before your eyes: ſin not wilfully for a world: be but found in the way of duty, and God will bleſſe you, and meet you in that way: be as exact in obedience, as if you had that frame of ſoul you deſire.

7. In a ſpecial manner keep all your bodily ſenſes and deſires in ſubjection; mortifie the fleſh, keep under your carnal deſires in a due ſubjection to the Spirit; let none of your ſenſes take the reines out of your hands: keep a dominion over your ſenſes.

Laſtly, All your life long be longing to die: let the work of your life be to learn to dye. Conſider what neceſſity to the ſafety and comfort of death, to conſider frequently, *what aſſaults will be made upon dying men*, that you may every day fortifie againſt it, to conſider what graces and duties will be moſt needful and uſeful then, that you may be moſt

moſt converſing with and exerciſing thoſe graces and duties. Hee that hath well learn'd to die, is no weak Chriſtian. The ſtrength of your grace lies in the exerciſe of theſe things; faithfully practiſe them. and you will ſtand when others fall; you will have comfort, when others caſt away their comfort; you will die in peace, when others die in horror.

The end of the Ninth Sermon.

SER-

SERMON X.

TEXT.

HEBR. 11. 38. The former Part of the verſe. *Mr Jenkins:*

Of whom the World was not worthy.

THE Apoſtle in this excellent Chapter (that by ſome is deſervedly called, a little Book of Martyrs) diſcovers the Triumph of Faith, or victory againſt all difficulty we meet with:

First, Faith it aſſents to Truths be they never ſo improbable.

Secondly, It puts men upon Duties, be they never ſo irrational, or againſt carnal Intereſt.

Thirdly, It enables to ſufferings, be they never ſo afflictive. Theſe Worthies went through all by the victory that overcame the world, the bitterneſs as well as the ſweetneſſe thereof.

In theſe Verſes the Apoſtle doth two things: Firſt, He ſets down the greatneſs and ſmartneſſe of their ſufferings, which are by ſome Learned men reduced to three Heads:

Firſt, Thoſe ſufferings that were to tempt them, and draw them from God, by thoſe pains and tortures they were to undergo.

Secondly, Thoſe ſufferings they underwent in dying.

Thirdly, Their ſufferings in regard of wandring and leaving their comforts, rather then they would loſe God.

There were all kind of perſecutions laid upon theſe Saints, through all which they waded, and never would be brought to forſake God and his truth, for any of them.

2. We

2. We have here the excellency of the ſufferer, and that is in that expreſſion, *Theſe men*, or *theſe perſons*, when they were under all theſe diſtreſſes from the world, yet they were ſuch of whom the world was not worthy.

Brethren, The excellency of theſe Saints and ſervants of God is conſiderable two wayes, that we may proceed diſtinctly and clearly.

Firſt, In reference to the wicked, their excellency was ſo great that the wicked world was not worthy of them.

Secondly, Their excellency is diſcovered from the eſtimate, or judgment that the Apoſtle paſſes upon them, who tells us, that he accounted them to be ſuch, though they were under ſuch diſtreſſes and troubles, yet they were a people of whom the world was not worthy.

I ſhall fall upon the due eſtimation the bleſſed Apoſtle raiſes upon theſe perſecuted Saints, who was enlightned by the Spirit of God, and ſo was able to paſſe a right ſentence upon theſe perſecuted Saints; from this I raiſe this enſuing Obſervation.

Obſerv. *That a godly man doth ſee a very great worth and excellency in the people of God in the midſt of all their troubles and diſtreſſes*; Or, *That a godly man, a gracious heart, one that hath ſpiritual Spectacles, does ſee an excellency and worth in the people of God, in the midſt of all trouble and perſecution that can befall them.*

Here I ſhall handle it firſt doctrinally according to my conſtant method, then come to improve it by way of Application. For the Doctrinal handling of it, there are two things muſt be diſcovered;

Firſt, Wherein the high eſtimation of a gracious heart does appear, wherein it doth diſcover it ſelf, wherein they ſhew they have ſuch an high eſtimation.

Secondly, Whence it is, and how it comes to paſs, that godly men have this high and honourable eſteem of the Saints and people of God in their troubles and diſtreſſes which befall them.

For the firſt, Wherein the high eſtimation of a gracious heart does appear, I ſhall ſhew it in five or ſix following particulars.

Firſt,

First, It appears in this, In that they are not ashamed of owning their persons and faith, that they profess in their troubles and distresses; the society of the people of God, and the fellowship of the Faith and profession, is highly respected by a gracious heart, let the Saints lye under never so great distresses. This is manifest in *Moses* in the 25. and 26. Verses of this Chapter, *He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to injoy all the pleasure and preferment of* Pharaohs *Court.* The *Israelites* Religion, the profession of the true God, and owning the faith and those Truths the *Israelites* stood up for, this was that which *Moses* would not desert: and thence it was he did not desert their company and society, but went and visited them when they lay under those burthens under which they lay.

Secondly, The second thing wherein is discovered so high an estimation of the Saints and people of God in sufferings, is their sympathizing, and fellow-feeling with them in their sufferings; if it goes ill with the Church and people of God, all the rest sympathizes with them; if one member suffers, all the rest suffer. Instance, *Nehemiah* (who had the greatest favour of the greatest Prince then on earth) he look'd with a sad countenance, because of the sufferings of the Saints and people of God,

Nehem. 2. 2. *Wherefore the King ſaid unto me, Why is thy countenance ſad, ſeeing thou art not ſick? this is nothing elſe but ſorrow of heart. Then I was very ſore afraid, and anſwered the King, Becauſe of the diſtreſſes the people of God lye under:* The pleaſure of Muſick ſhould never be with him, ſayes *David*, in *Pſal.* 137. 6. *If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jeruſalem above my chief joy.* As it is with two ſtrings in an inſtrument rightly tuned, if one be touched, the other trembles; if one ſervant of Chriſt be in a ſuffering condition, the reſt ſuffers with him: this is the damp of all worldly delight, if it be ill with any of the people of God, the reſt ſuffer in the way of compaſſion.

Thirdly, In that they can plead for them, and take their parts, when they are never ſo much out of favour, when they are never ſo much deſpiſed and abuſed: This was in the caſe of *Jonathan*, how hee pleaded for poor *David* before his cruel father *Saul*, though *Saul* called him a curſed ſon, and fell foul on his Mother becauſe of him. See this in the caſe of *Eſther*, though it was death to go in to the King, to plead for the *Jewes*, yet for all this ſhee ſayes, *If I periſh, I periſh*; reſolved I am, come what will come of it, in I will go, I can die, but I cannot be ſilent.

Fourth-

Fourthly, In that they will relieve them, and help, and ſupply them with all needful good things they can; if they cannot do what they would, they will do for them what they can. See this in the caſe of *Jeremiah*, chap. 38. verſe 8, 11, 12. 13. *Ebedmelech went forth out of the Kings houſe, and ſpake to the King*——: *So* Ebedmelech *took the men with him, and went into the houſe of the King, under the treaſury, and took thence old caſt clouts, and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to* Jeremiah. *And* Ebedmelech *the Ethiopian ſaid unto* Jeremiah, *Put now theſe old caſt clouts, and rotten rags under thine arm-holes under the cords. And* Jeremiah *did ſo. So they drew up* Jeremiah *with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon, and* Jeremiah *remained in the Court of the priſon.* He would never be quiet till hee had got the Prophet out of the dungeon, and though the cords were lined with rags, yet more with love: and this favour of *Ebedmelech* God remembred. 1 *Kings* 18. 4. *Obadiahs* maſter was not onely an oppreſſor of the Saints and Prophets of God, but a very great perſecutor: This good man *Obadiah* took and hid *an hundred Prophets of the Lord, and fed them with bread and water* (I will not undertake to propheſie to you this day, yet time may come, when bread and water may bee good food for a faithful Prophet.)

Here note the gracious diſpoſition of good *Obadiah*, as well as the providence of God in this act. 2 *Tim.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *The Lord give mercy unto the houſe* Oneſiphorus, *for he oft refreſhed me, and was not aſhamed of my chaine. But when he was in* Rome, *he ſought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may finde mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things hee miniſtred unto me at* Epheſus, *thou knoweſt very well.* A moſt admirable Scripture to this purpoſe. Bleſſed *Paul* being thrown into priſon, being in bonds, *Oneſiphorus* often refreſh'd him, and was not aſhamed of his chaines: How did he ſhew this? When he was in *Rome*, he ſought him out diligently.

By the way note, That *Rome* was the place where the cruel *Nero* was Emperour, it was the place where much blood of the Martyrs was ſpilt, yet there this good man ſought out *Paul* diligently. Mark what follows, which is the prayer of *Paul*, *The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.*

I profeſs Sirs, I had rather have the prayers of *Paul*, then the preferments of the greateſt Court on earth: Chriſtians, it is the greateſt treaſure in your houſe, to have the prayers of good men to God for you: You that have ſhewn your great

great and abundant love to the Saints and Servants of God in diſtreſs: I do from my ſoul beg the like mercy for you, that whatever you have done for his, may be ten thouſand times made up by him, that you may find mercy in that day, and truely Sirs, in that day mercy will be worth receiving.

Fifthly, They ſupplicate to God for them, they do not go to the Throne of Grace for themſelves, but *Sion* is in their thoughts. I am confident it is ſo with ſome, and am perſwaded it is ſo with all; they never beg daily bread for themſelves, but they remember *Sion*: In the 51 Pſalm, *David* was under trouble of Conſcience, ſoul-trouble, which is the ſoul of trouble, yet at the latter end of the 51 Pſalme he breaks out into this earneſt ſupplication to God, *Do good in thy good pleaſure unto Sion, build thou up the walls of* Jeruſalem: So long as it is ill with the people of God, ſo long they are earneſt with God; and though they cannot overcome men with their prayers (which by the way they are to endeavour) yet they will never leave ſupplicating the Almighty, till they have overcome. As the ſufferings of Gods people are precious in the ſight of God, ſo

ſo they are in the ſight of the people of God.

I come now to ſhew whence it is, That there is ſuch an high eſteem in the people of God, of the people of God, when under trouble and diſtreſs; for this take two Heads of Reaſons.

Firſt, In regard of thoſe of the people of God that do behold their ſufferings.

Secondly, In regard of thoſe people of God that are in ſufferings.

Firſt, In regard thoſe of the people of God, that do behold their ſufferings, troubles and diſtreſſes, in three regards.

Firſt, Thoſe of the people of God that look upon others in trouble, though they are ſuch as may differ from them, in regard of outward eſtate; one may be in honour, the other in diſhonour, yet they have an intereſt in the ſame head, and do belong to the ſame body that they do; they are not wooden leggs, nor glaſſe eyes; therefore Chriſt is called the Common Saviour, and the Saviour of the body, the whole Church: Faith it is called, the *like precious faith*, 2 *Pet.* 1 ch. in the beginning: *to them that have obtained like pre-*

cious

cious Faith, &c. The faith of one believer does as truely lay hold on Christ, as the faith of another. This salvation is called common salvation: my meaning is, this outward disproportion, as to birth and education, puts no difference at all in a spiritual respect, between believer and believer: a King and a Beggar, all one in Christ; a *Jew* or a *Greek*, a great Scholar, or a poor ignorant man, as to the spiritual state, all one, made happy the same way.

Secondly, Because they look at Spiritual excellency, and are able to discern spiritual excellency; they have a renewed Judgement, as they look upon their old courses and sinnes with a new eye, so they look upon their company with a new eye: those that before they highly esteem'd, they now disesteem: those persons that before they esteem'd a damp to their mirth, they now look upon them as the excellent ones of the earth. *Prov.* 12. *v.* 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.* In the 16 Psalme, sayes *David*, *My goodnesse extends not to thee, but to the Saints*; *the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.* Here was a renewed estimation, *David* saw excellency in these which worldlings despised. A carnal eye sees no glory but in carnal objects; Worldlings blesse the Covetous, whom the Lord abhorrs.

A gracious heart ſees a ſpiritual worth in a man diveſted of worldly enjoyments, as a curious eye may, and does ſee a great deal of Art and Curioſity in a picture, though in a broken frame. A Beaſt can ſee the ſhining of a Diamond, but knowes not the worth of it; a beaſt will rather lick up a lock of Hay, then a Diamond, though of never ſo great value. A wicked man wants a ſpirit of diſcerning. The people of God are the Workmanſhip of God, which a godly man is very much taken withall; not with the greatneſſe, but with the goodneſſe that is in them. The four Monarchs of the earth are expreſt by four beaſts, which ſhewes their cruelty, not their curioſity, in obſerving that of God which may be obſerved. A child is taken with the Gay, but a Learned man is taken with the Learning, and Art of a leſſon.

Thirdly, A child of God, is one that highly eſteemes the people of God, judging of them as God judges. The child eſteems as the father eſteems: if the father cannot love any one, the ingenious child cannot endure that he ſhould come into the houſe. The Courtier followes the favorite of the King; whom the King honours, they cringe to. But to be ſure it is true as to ſpirituals: God judges not by the gold ring, or ſilken ſhute; a ſinner is a vile perſon in Gods ac-

account, and ſo he is in a godly mans account; God is more taken with a broken-hearted ſigh, than with all the gaudery in *Solomons* Temple. He did not chuſe the Eagle, or the Lion for ſacrifice, but the Lamb and the Dove: not many noble, not many rich, but the poor hath God choſen: He that hath the life of God, he hath the love of God.

2d. *Reaſon*, Is from the people of God that are beheld. This will appear in five or ſix particulars.

Firſt, The people of God, thoſe that are truly ſuch, let their preſent condition be what it will, their end ſhall be happy. Men are not regarded in reference to what they have in poſſeſſion, but what they ſhall have in reverſion: the poor here are rich in faith, and ſhall be rich in glory. 1 *Peter*, 3. *ch.* The people of God are Heires of glory, coheires with Chriſt; when he ſhall appear, they ſhall appear with him in Glory: they are not poſſeſſors here, but they are Heires, and are to be look'd upon as what they ſhall be hereafter: Here they are Princes going to their Crown, hereafter they ſhall be poſſeſſed of it: Here they may be oppreſſed, baniſh'd, diſgrac'd, libell'd, hereafter they ſhall ſhine as the Sun in Glory.

Secondly, They are not onely ſuch as ſhall be

be happy, but they are very uſeful and beneficial in the world, they are thoſe for whoſe ſake the world was made, they are the great common bleſſings of the world, like fire and water, they are thoſe for whoſe ſake God ſpares the world. If *God* would have ſpared the City for ten righteous perſons ſakes, ſurely for many tens *God* ſpares the world; thoſe that are pull'd down by the world, are thoſe for whoſe ſake *God* doth not pull down the world, they are the ſoul of the world, as I may ſo ſay; If God had gathered in all his Elect, the world would not continue one hour longer.

Thirdly, The excellency of their performances is highly eſteemed, there is a worth in every holy Work, that Worldlings are not able to diſcern; Every Heavenly Prayer, and ſincerely beſtowed Almes, hath a worth that a carnal eye does not ſee: *Luther* ſayes, *I had rather do the leaſt truly good work, than obtain all the Conqueſts of* Cæſar *and* Alexander. If their good works ſhall be ſo rewarded, do you think a holy man can ſee them, and not be taken with them? Many a wicked man when hee heares a holy man make an excellent Oration, wiſhes that hee could do ſo too: it is not from the goodneſſe hee obſerves in it, or the principle from whence it comes, but from ſome-

thing

thing of natural accompliſhments that he is taken with it: ſo a godly man when hee heares another pray excellently, and live holily, hee wiſhes from his heart that hee could do ſo too: his aim is to grow in Holineſſe.

Fourthly, The preſent priviledges of the people of God, not onely what they ſhall have hereafter, but what they have here, they are freed from a world of evils, that Worldlings lye under, whatever befalls them turns to their benefit; they may be afflicted, but not hurt by affliction; the greateſt hurt the world does to them, tends to their greateſt good; Worldlings may take away their Heads, they cannot take their Crown: There is a real communication of a bleſſed intereſt in all that is good, for they have an intereſt in all that God hath, or is: The power of God is theirs, to protect them, the love of God is ſet upon them, the righteouſneſſe of God imputed to them, ſo as to acquit them from ſin; ſo that a childe of God may not onely appeal to the bowels of *Gods* mercy, but to the barr of Juſtice: all the providences of God ſhall tend to their good: In the 25th. Pſalme, about the 10th. Verſe, the Holy Ghoſt ſayes, *All the wayes of God are Mercy and Truth, to them that are in Covenant with him*; they

are

are Mercy, becauſe they are appointed to do them good; and Truth, becauſe they ſhall certainly do them good: Chriſt, and God, and all is laid out for the good of a godly man. In this world they may go to God, and tell him wherein they are troubled, pained, or afflicted, and they are never more welcome to him, then when they ask moſt from him; if thou askeſt great things from God, God is well taken with ſuch requeſts, but if thou askeſt Riches and Honours, theſe are the low things of the Foot-ſtool: God is exceedingly taken with thee, when thou askeſt Peace and Pardon, Peace of Conſcience, Pardon of Sin, Strength againſt Sin, power to overcome thy Luſts, to withſtand Temptations. The people of God may have from God all that they want, and all they can regularly wiſh.

Fifthly, Theſe are ſuch as have an incomparable dear and near relation to God, they are his delight, they are ſet apart by God as his own, his peculiar people; though God have a propriety in all, yet he hath a peculiar propriety in, and relation to theſe; therefore they are called his Children, his Houſe, his Jewels, his Garden; Gods whole Treaſure and Portion is his people; as God is his peoples portion, ſo his people are his portion, they are thoſe that he hath been at a great deal of coſt to purchaſe.

Sixthly,

6thly. They are ſuch as have the Image of God imprinted upon them, take notice of this word Image, for the Image of God appears in Holineſſe ; Now an Image does not repreſent any thing of imperfection or deformity, but of Excellency. If a man takes the Picture of a man, he will not take it of his backſide, Leg, or Hand, or the like, but of his Face, his beautifulleſt part is chiefly aimed at in the Picture; Wicked men diſcover Gods bounty in having wit and wealth, this is not the Image of God, the Image of God is that which is moſt excellent in a man, which is Holineſſe: The power of God is the Hand of God, the Wiſedome of God is the Eye of God, the Holineſſe of God is the Face, the Beauty of God, the people of God reſemble God in Purity, *Be ye Holy as your Heavenly Father is Holy*, there's the Pattern, they have the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.* Epheſ. 4. 18. *Having the underſtanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſſe of their heart.* Rom. 3 23 *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* There is more of God in Grace, then in all the works that ever God did in the World beſides ; There is much of God ſeen in making the Sun, Moon, and Stars, but in giving a man a new Nature, a renewed underſtanding, in changing of a man from being a Veſſel of wrath, and Vaſſal of Sathan, in making of him become a new man, a

Veſſel of Glory; God ſhews more of himſelf then in making ten thouſand worlds.

Uſe. Here I ſhall raiſe theſe following Inferences: If it be ſo that there is ſuch an excellency in the people of God here, then firſt, what excellency ſhall there be ſeen on the people of God in Heaven? If they are ſo beautifull in their rags, what will they be when they appear in their Robes? The Glory of Chriſt ſhall be admired in them that believe. Oh what a Head is he that hath ſuch members? What a Lord is he that hath ſuch Attendance?. The people of God are in a ſtate of Non-appearance now, hereafter it ſhall appear what they are, the very wicked themſelves ſhall admire them.

2. *Inference.* What are we to think of thoſe that have no regard either for Religion, or for Religious ones, any farther forth then it is deckt and adorn'd with advantagious Beauty and outward Glory? If Religion be not lookt upon with a favourable Eye from Authority, farewell Religion and Religiouſneſſe. Theſe love the Child for the Nurſes ſake, what is the thing in faſhion theſe are for, what Authority commands they'le creep and cringe to; When the Dear is ſhot, the Heard flies from her, when Religion is ſhot at, then farewell Religion; what is this but to have the Faith of God in reſpect of Perſons? If I love Religion for the countenance of Authority, then it is certain I love Religion for the Authorities ſake; This is a ſign thou ſhalt not have communion with thoſe hereafter that thou contemneſt here: If the people of God are too bad

for

for thee when they are in trouble and affliction, they will be too good for thee in Glory.

3. *Inference.* Note here the excellency of Holineſſe above Wordly Glory; Here a man is dignified by what is conferr'd upon him, when outward Honour ceaſeth, the man is contemned, but Holineſſe it dignifies a man, and ſhall remain here and hereafter; Set a Gyant in a valley he is a Gyant ſtill; a Pearl is a Pearl though on a dunghill; a Holy man is a Holy man though never ſo much diſgraſt and contemned by men: *John Baptiſt* had a Leathern Girdle, and had Locuſt for his food, yet there was not a greater then *John Baptiſt* born of Women; He was the forerunner of Chriſt, the Friend of the Bridegroom; on the other ſide *Herod*, that was like the Voyce of God, and not of man, what was he in Gods account? The Angel ſmote him and he became Worms meat. There is a ſilent dignity in reproached piety, and a ſilent ignominy in advanced iniquity: As it was with Chriſt, ſo it is with the Servants of Chriſt; When he was on Earth no man had more ignominy poured upon him, yet there was a ſecret Glory attended him in all that befell him; though Born in a Manger, yet Worſhipped there, ſometimes he was driven to be hungry, the Fiſh brought him money, ſometimes a weary, at that very time converts a Woman, ſometimes laid hold on by his Enemies, at that very time his Enemies fell down before him; Look through the whole courſe of his life, there was a ſecret glory under all ignominy: Juſt thus it is with the Servants of Chriſt, they are in trouble and

disgrace, but there is a secret Glory and dignity shines in them, the Spirit of God and of Glory rests upon them; If ye suffer for righteousnesse sake, blessed are ye; to be in high place and yet to be a Drunkard, or a Swearer, or a Whoremaster, or Prophane, this spoyles all thy glory, be thou never so high.

4. *Inference.* This is the way for a man to have a good name; wouldst thou gain a good report living and dying? Take heed of sin, take heed of dishonouring God, then God will have thee in everlasting remembrance.

5. *Inference.* Note here the certain happinesse of these beholders, that do see certain excellency in Holinesse, though disgrast and undervalued; if there be any thing in the world that is a sign of sincerity it is this, to love Holinesse, when disgrast, abused, and spit upon; to crosse the stream, and thwart the multitude, is a sign of the truth of Grace, and strength of Grace: This is a sign of a true sight, and strong sight. To see beauty in a Godly man in sufferings, the Lord will certainly have an eye upon thee in times of troubles; Here is comfort in thine infirmities. Dost thou love Holinesse when compassed about with sufferings and persecution? God will take notice of thy Grace, though compassed about with abundance of infirmities; the Lord will take notice of a little of his, in a great deal of ours: Here's comfort in sufferings: If you regard his in their sufferings, the Lord will remember you in your sufferings, the Lord will remember what thou didst for such and such a Servant of his in trouble or distresse;

ſtreſſe; God doth not caſt away any in their lowneſſe, that have kept cloſe to him in their highneſſe; and this will be comfort in inward trouble, when thou canſt find nothing from which to fetch comfort. And this will be comfort in the laſt day, though we can ſay nothing in that day by way of merit, yet it will be comfort to be able ſincerely to ſay, that thou haſt owned God and his people in the midſt of ſufferings: Do ye think that Judge would not ſave that Malefactor that had ſaved the life of his Wife? If thou haſt owned Chriſt when he was in his Rags, do not fear but he will own thee when he comes in his Robes.

6. *Inference*, and laſt, The People of God ſhould learn not to be diſcouraged under any miſery or affliction that can befall them in this world; at this very time God hath a high eſteem of you; At this time you are his delight, his Garden, his Spouſe. The Saints of God are the wiſemen of the world, they have choſen that which cannot be taken from them: I profeſs Sirs, the love of one Saint makes amends for all the hatred you undergo from ſinners, the very wicked themſelves have a good opinion of you, when you do not baſely comply, their Conſciences cannot but have an high eſteem of you, when peradventure their tongues might ſpeak againſt you. If all this will not do, remember your own Conſciences are more then a thouſand witneſſes, for you will then comfort you; No man is a miſerable man for any thing in the world that is done to him, or ſaid of him; No, it is a good Con-

ſcience that will give the beſt acquittance; for thee to have the whole number of Gods people to look upon thee as an unworthy wretch, and as a vile perſon, I look upon it as a greater ignominy and diſgrace, then to have all the diſgraces of wicked men caſt upon thee: That man that hath a Godly man to be afraid of him, had need to be very much afraid of himſelf. I ſhall conclude all with this one word, There is great reaſon to look narrowly to your hearts and wayes, when they ſtand at a diſtance from you, and are afraid to come near you.

The End of the Tenth Sermon.

SERMON

SERMON XI.

Mr. *Jenkins* Afternoon SERMON.

Exod. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.

And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a Buſh; and he looked, and behold, the Buſh burned with fire, and the Buſh was not conſumed. And Moſes *ſaid, I will now turn aſide and ſee this great ſight, why the Buſh is not burnt. And when the Lord ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him out of the midſt of the Buſh, and ſaid,* Moſes, Moſes, *And he ſaid, Here am I. And he ſaid, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground.*

LET us take a ſhort view of the fore-going Verſes; and that this may be the more uſefull and profitable to us, we may take notice, That as in the former Chapter there is deſcribed *Moſes's* preſervation to his future em-

ployment; so in this Chapter there is described his preparation, and his fitting for that employment, *i. e.* by a *Vision*, or rather a suitable *Apparition*, in which God discovered unto *Moses* his care of the people, of whom *Moses* was to be a speedy deliverer: You have here in the words read unto you the preparation afforded to *Moses* for the great work, of being call'd to be *Israel's* deliverer, and in this preparation you may take notice of these three principal parts.

1. An *Apparition* that is here presented to the view of *Moses*, *A burning, though not a consumed Bush.*

2. *Moses* care to observe it, *I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the Bush is not burned.* And then,

3. Gods Monitory Precept, or Admonition, which he afforded unto *Moses*, when he was drawing near to see this wonder, in which we have principally considerable two parts.

1. This Precept propounded, 1. Negatively, *That he should not draw near.* 2. Affirmatively, *That he should put off his shoes from off his feet.*

2. You have considerable the Reason or Argumen', whereby God doth back this Precept or Admonition, *i. e. Because that place whereon he stood was holy ground.* The time would fail me if I should go over all these parts, we shall only touch on the two former, the *Apparition* which *Moses* saw, and *Moses's* desire to observe it, of which I shall only speak transitorily, and insist on the latter more fully, which I chiefly intend.

1. For

1. For the Apparition, or emblematical diſcovery of the eſtate of the Church in the *burning*, and yet *unconſumed buſh*. And herein take notice of three things.

1. The lowneſſe and weakneſſe of the *Church*, repreſented by a *Buſh*.

2. The *cruelties* of the *Churches* enemies, ſignifi'd and repreſented by *Fire*.

3. The eminency of its preſervation, though in the *fire*, yet *unconſumed*.

And in this only take notice, that the *Church* is compared to a *buſh* for two reaſons; 1 In regard of its deformity and blackneſſe, and uncomlineſſe. 2, In regard of its weakneſſe and brittleneſſe. The Church is uncomly in regard of ſin, and weak in regard of ſuffering, and God ſees it beſt that it ſhould be thus with them to humble them, and to ſhew his goodneſſe to accept them, and to love them, and make them long for their future beauty; and hereby God makes them more conformable to their Head, hereby he makes them endeavour to look after inward beauty and glory; hereby he puts them on a life of faith, and takes them off from living by ſenſe, and creature comforts, and from being entangled with creature-comfort. And hereby he ſhows how little he regards the beauty and glory of this life, which he denies to the beſt of his people: And hereby he ſhows, that there is a better ſtate of appearance and glory approaching; and therefore the people of God are not to be cenſured under their blackneſs and deformity, either in regard of ſin or ſuffering

fering; their happineſſe is not to be judg'd by its outward appearance, becauſe this life is but the obſcurity of the Church; we ſee them like the *Tents of Kedar*, but we do not ſee how like the *Curtains of Solomon they ſhall be.* 2. The people of God ſhould take heed of expecting that glory of this world, which is not promiſed to them, and to ſet their hearts on Heaven. And you may ſee the reaſon, why wicked men ſtumble ſo much at the *outſide* of God's Worſhip, becauſe there is no *outward bravery and beauty* to allure them to the true Worſhip.

2. The Church is compared to a *Buſh*, in regard of its *weakneſſe* and *brittleneſſe*. Note, That it is not compar'd to a ſtrong ſturdy Oke, but to a weak brittle Buſh. God loves to bring his Church into a low and weak eſtate and condition; as it is here compared to a *Buſh*, ſo other-where to a *Vine*, a *Dove*, a *Lamb*, and a *Sheep*, all weak creatures. Sometimes the Church is ſaid to be fatherleſs and deſtitute; and as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Head of the Church, was ſaid to be *weak, a worm and no man*; and as the *Apoſtle* ſaid, *Suffered through weakneſſe.* And this makes them to truſt in God, and puts them to reſt on his ſtrength; *When we are weak, then are we ſtrong*; outward *weakneſſe* will make us look the more to Chriſt for *ſpiritual ſtrength*; the weakneſſe of our ſtate doth ſhew the ſpiritual ſtrength God gives to his people for the upholding of them. And this weakneſſe of his Church doth exceedingly confound his enemies, when ſo weak a company ſhall be delivered,

livered, not only *againſt*, but *by* the ſtrength of men; and hereby God doth gain to himſelf the greater glory in their deliverance, for remembring them in their weak eſtate. Hereby the people of God are made the more thankfull, both for their preſervation *in*, and deliverence *from* their powerfull adverſaries. You ſee, here is a large field opened unto me, for the diſcourſing upon the Church's weakneſſe, which, whether it be more ſuitable to the *Text*, or to the *Times*, I leave to you to judge. But,

2. Conſider the *cruelty* of their *oppoſition*: that is ſet forth and repreſented *by the fire that burned in the Buſh*. *Afflictions*, and eſpecially *perſecuting* ones, are in Scripture frequently ſet out by *fire*, as, *The fiery tryal*, *the fire of Affliction*. This doth not only diſcover the *rage* and *cruelty* of men, but alſo the benefit and utility that comes to the Church by Affliction; for the Afflictions of the Church are not as *conſuming*, but *trying fire*; as the fire in a Furnace is to Gold, it only takes away the droſſe; not like the fire of *hell*, which hath *heat* without *light*, but the *School* of perſecution hath *light* as well as *heat*; the School of Affliction is the School of teaching, God teacheth his Saints excellent Leſſons by the light of that fire. But I paſſe by that. I might now inſiſt upon the third thing. ——

3. Conſider the *eminence* of their preſervation, *It was not conſumed*; the Church of God was *hot*, but not altogether and wholly *conſumed*; let the fire be never ſo hot and ſpreading, the Church of

God

God shall have a *being*; if the Church be lesse in one place, it will be greater in another; what it loses in one place, it gets in another; and God will have a Name among his people on earth: A man may as well attempt to blow out the light of the Sun with a pair of bellows, or batter it with snow-balls, as to root the Church out of the world; for it is impossible to root Christ's Church out of the world. And if you take notice of particular Believers, *it is not consumed*, in a way of hurting and destroying them; and consider, their graces are not consumed, their welfare is not destroyed; this fire cannot burn them *up*, though it burn *upon* them: But as he will mitigate and allay the fire, so as that it shall not decrease their strength, so he will cleanse his people by the fire, so as that it shall burn up nothing but their drosse, and what makes them offensive unto God, and what may make them hurtful one to another. But I passe by these things to the second general Part, *viz.*

2. *Moses care* to observe God's admonition, *That he would turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush was not burnt.* *Moses* was an excellent Naturalist, and yet here he was posed; he could see no reason in nature by all the learning of the *Egyptians*, how this thing should come to passe, that a flaming *fire* should be in a brittle *bush*, and yet the *bush* not *consumed*: And yet I do not conceive (as some Jesuitical Expositors upon the place do) that *Moses* did turn aside so much out of *curiosity*, as to *understand* what it was that God did

did intend by it, and would have him to learn by it. And doubtleſſe when God's works are great, our obſervations ſhould not be ſmall; when his providence is eminently lifted up, we ſhould not be caſt down; when the hand of God is upon us, we muſt not ſhut our eyes. I am very far from being a Phanatique, and to give credit or be led by unſcriptural revelations; but yet let me tell you, the times wherein we live are ſtrange times, in regard of *ſtrange ſights* and *apparitions*, and I queſtion if there have not been *ſome* as wonderfull as *this* in our times, but I ſhall not now mention them; though it be a forfeiture of your modeſty to give a reaſon for them, yet they do portend ſome ſtrange things; the hand of God is not to be neglected, thongh it cannot be perfectly conceived; and it is the nature of a wicked man to have *Gods works far out of his ſight*; be ſure to lay them up in *your* hearts: And thus far you may take notice of them, To truſt that God that hath all the Elementary *Meteors* in his power, and at his command; and this *learn*, to tremble and dread before that God that hath you in his power, and can do with you and all other things as he pleaſes.

3. You have here conſiderable the Admonition of God, or the Monitory Precept God lays down to *Moſes*, *i. e.* he forbids him to *draw nigher*, and then bids him *to pull off his ſhoes*: the reaſon of the *former* will be eaſily underſtood in the opening of the *latter*; I ſhall therefore in it briefly take notice of two things.

1. An

1. An Injunction, *Put off thy shoes.*

2. The Argument whereby he doth back this, *Because the place whereon he stood was holy ground.*

For the opening of the former, the Injunction, *Put off thy shoes*, I shall not give the divers glosses and divers Interpretations which men, with more *wit* then *weight*, have endeavoured to make of this Scripture; the plain meaning is this, which is given us by *Theodoret*, *Put off thy shoes*, God's scope, and drift, and intent hereby was, to require of *Moses* reverence, when he was to receive a Message of very great concernment and importance about his Church; the design of God was in this to prepare him to obedience, therefore God requires that of him then, which servants were wont to do when they came to their Lord and Master, to shew their reverence to them, servants used to come bare-foot to their Master, to testifie reverence to the commands of them on whom they waited: *Nudare pedes signum reverentiæ.* And the *putting on the shoes* is in Scripture, as well as among other Writers, held as a token of domination or masterly power. Hence some conceive, *John* spake of *Christ* as one that had his *shoes* on; and of himself, as one that was unworthy to unty his *shoes*. And the Prophet *Isaiah*, by a sign of *putting off his shoes*, is commanded by God to put off his shoes from off his feet, and to walk naked and bare-foot; and he did so, *Isa.* 20. 2. which denoteth the *servility* of the *People*, in token that God's people were to be in a low condition in captivity. So we read of *Mourners* in *Ezekiel*, *chap.* 24. 17.

24. 17. *that were of a low ſpirit*, they are ſaid *to go without ſhoes*, or *unſhod*. And, my brethren, on the other ſide, when God would ſhow the freedom of his people, and their deliverance from ſervitude, he is ſaid to *put ſhoes on their feet*, Ezech. 16 10. And the reception of the *Prodigal* into his Fathers houſe, and the freedom and previledge his Father intended him, (according to ſome learned men, intended by that expreſſion in *Luk.* 1. 22.) is ſet forth by *putting on ſhoes* upon his feet. So that I take the meaning of this *command* to be ſo much; Shew by this thy reverence, thy humility, thy due ſubmiſſiveneſs, thy ſubjection of ſpirit, together with thy ſervile readineſs to do whatſoever I ſhall command thee. *Calvin* hath this Note upon the *Text*, If ſo excellent a ſervant of God as *Moſes* had need to be quickened to reverence and obedience by ſuch a ceremony, certainly we that are more backward to humility and obedience, ſhould by our reverent behaviour, when we come into the preſence of God, ſignifie both the reverence of our ſouls by our outward expreſſions, and likewiſe quicken and fortifie the inward graces of our ſouls by the outward geſtures of the body, (eſpecially in prayer) as kneeling, and lifting up the hands, uncovering of the head, and the like: for the preſence of God is *great*, and it's the preſence of the *great* God indeed; we that are not only by the *Law* of *Creation* ſo *infinitely below* him, but alſo in regard of that illegal Law of ſin, ſo much againſt him, ſhould teſtifie our *humility* before him, and *ſubjection* to him,

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when he calls for it by our reverence.

2. The Reaſon by which this is backt, *Becauſe the place whereon Moſes did ſtand was holy ground.* The meaning I take to be this, It is holy in regard of that viſible and miraculous *token*, *ſymbol*, and *ſign* of my preſence, that is here diſcovered in this place; not becauſe the place was (as I do not underſtand how any place is) of its own nature holy, but God did teſtifie, that that place being the place of his ſpecial preſence, had thereby a holineſſe, there being now a ſign given by *God* to *Moſes*, that he was extraordinarily and miraculouſly there. And thus I have opened the ſecond Branch, whereon this Injunction was backt, *This place was holy*; ſo it was *then*. Now I do not underſtand how I can diſcourſe of this ſo profitably unto you, concerning the holineſſe of places, unleſſe we take notice of the holineſſe of places now in the time of the Goſpel, and conſider, whether, and how, in theſe times, one place may be ſaid to be holy or holier then another. And truly I am not put on this employment willingly, nor the handling of this ſubject; and if it were not extorted from me by ſomething, I do not ſay that I have *ſeen*, but that I have *read*, that was *written* by men, and thoſe none of the *meaneſt* neither, the *learnedeſt* of the *Papiſts*, I ſhould not now have choſen to have entred upon this task, concerning the holineſſe of places, in oppoſition to *whom*, I have entred upon this diſcourſe: I will give you two expreſſions, which one of the *devouteſt*, and the other of the *learned'ſt* of

them

them hath; the *learnedeſt* of them, accounted ſo at leaſt (though, bleſſed be God, his weapons have not been formidable to the Church) is *Bellarmine*, his words are theſe, *Templum conſecrandum merito venerabile & divina virtute præditum eſt*, The Temple conſecrated is deſervedly holy, and venerable in worſhip, and endowed with divine virtue and efficacy; the Temple ought to be looked upon as honourable and venerable. And for the other, *Durandus*, he tells us, *So great is the Religion and Holineſſe of Churches, that thoſe things ſhould be, and may be forbidden to be done in them*, (he means perpetually, or elſe he ſaith nothing, for we grant as much) *which in other places may duly and lawfully be done.*

In the handling of this Queſtion, *How we are to judge and conceive of the holineſſe of places in the times of the Goſpel?* I ſhall endeavour, firſt, to explain it, and then *faithfully* and *truly* endeavour to reſolve and determine the ſame.

Firſt then, for *Explanation*, I ſhall here endeavour to open theſe two things to you; firſt, what it is for a place to be *holy*, or wherein the nature of the *holineſſe* of *places* conſiſts: ſecondly, what that is that is the *foundation* or *cauſe* of the *holineſſe* of *places*, and both theſe muſt in our diſcourſe, and likewiſe apprehenſion be accurately diſtinguiſh'd.

1. What it is for a *place* to be *holy*, this is two wayes to be conſidered; 1. generally; 2. more particularly.

1. More generally, The *holineſſe* of a *place* doth

conſiſt in the *ſeparation* thereof, the ſetting it apart, the diſtinction and diſcrimination in the way of ſome excellent preheminence, or the exalting of it before and above all other places: Thus the notion of the holineſſe of places is taken in Scripture, *Exod.* 30. 31, 37, 38. you ſhall there read, that the Lord tells them in the 31 verſe, concerning the *oyntment* that he preſcribed, and likewiſe the *compoſition* of it for his ſervice, *This ſhall be an holy anointing oyl unto me throughout your generations.* Now ſee how God doth diſcover this to be holy, *On mans fleſh it ſhall not be poured, neither ſhall you make any other like it after the compoſition of it.* Here was a diſcrimination, as well to the *uſing* of it as to the *making* and *compoſition* of it; as none was to *make* ſuch an *oyntment* as this was, ſo none was to *uſe* it in their *ordinary* and *common* employments: ſo that now the *holineſſe* thereof did conſiſt in the *diſtinction* and *diſcrimination* of it from other *uſes*, and likewiſe from all other *oyntments*. And this is further expreſſed concerning the *holy perfumes* in the 37 and 38 verſes, there was to be a *difference* between *this* and *other* perfumes; and *this* was the *holineſs* thereof. And ſo you ſhall find it not onely concerning *holy things*, but likewiſe concerning *holy perſons*, *Levit.* 20. 24, 25, *I am the Lord your God, which have ſeparated you from other people; you ſhall therefore put a difference between clean beaſts, and unclean.* Mark ye, herein is the *holineſſe* of the *people*, that they were a *differenced* and *ſever'd* people. And hence it is you read in *Deuteronomy*, *chap.* 26. 18, 19,

18, 19. that *God* is there ſaid to *avouch his people*, openly to diſcover himſelf to aſſert it *that they are his people*; their *holineſſe* was a *diſcrimination*, a *ſeparation* from the reſt of the people. And in *Deut.* 7. 6. and 14. 2. you have there the very ſame things deſcribed and diſcovered to you. And now for this I ſhall deſire you to take notice of comparing two places of Scripture, which diſcovers the holineſſe of places, in *Deut.* 19. 2. 7. *Thou ſhalt ſeparate three Cities for thee in the midſt of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to poſſeſſe it.* And at the ſeventh verſe, *Wherefore I command thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt ſeparate three Cities for thee.* Now you ſhall have this again propounded to you in *Joſhua*, chap. 20. 7. *And they ſanctifi'd Kedeſh in Galilee in Naphtaly, and Sechem in mount Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (which is Hebron) in the mountain of Judah.* Mark the Scripture, that that was called *Separation* in *Deut.* 19. 2. 7. is here called *Sanctification*; therefore the word in the *Hebrew* is, *And you ſhall ſanctifie*, or, *make holy theſe places*; that is, *holy*, by the *ſeparation* of them unto that employment that I ſhall appoint: Hence a thing is ſaid to be unholy in Scripture when it is common, is not ſeparated and ſet apart to holy employments and ſervices, and from every thing that is of a civil concernment. And hence you read in *Act.* 10. 14. in the *Viſion* that *Peter* had, God bids *Peter kill and eat. But Peter ſaid, Not ſo, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.* That that is *unclean* and *unholy*, in a way of *legal unholyneſſe*, is

ſaid to be *common*, not ſet apart. *Heb.* 10. 29. you ſhall there read this notion clearly diſcovered to you in the New Teſtament, *Of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under-foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was ſanctifi'd an unholy thing.* An *unholy thing* is a *common* thing. So that now what is *ſanctification* in the former part of the verſe, is called *commonneſſe* and *uncleanneſſe* in the latter part. But not to give you any more inſtances of this nature, the *general nature* of *holineſſe* is *diſcrimination* or *ſeparation.*

2. To anſwer it more particularly, this *ſetting apart*, or *diſcrimination*, or *ſeparation* of places for holy uſes, muſt have theſe two properties.

1. A place that is holy, it muſt have ſuch a ſeparation from other places, as that it muſt be *alienated* from all uſes but holy uſes, it muſt not at all be employed to civil uſes, for the employing of it unto civil uſes muſt be looked upon as ſinfull and unlawfull. Thus in the Scripture, when times, things, or perſons are reputed as holy, they are to be exempted from common employment; the *Sabbath day*, a *holy day*, *In it thou muſt not do any manner of work.* The *Veſſels* and *Utenſils* of the *Temple* were *holy*, and therefore were not to be uſed to ordinary uſes; and this, as ſome think, was the great ſin of *Belſhazar*, that he would offer to drink in the Veſſels of the *Temple.* And ſo the *garments* of the *Prieſts* were *holy*, and not to be uſed by ſecular perſons. And the *Tabernacle* and

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the *Temple* were *holy*, and not to be uſed in civil employments.

2. More particularly, concerning this holineſs I deſire to ſhew you what it is, by ſhewing you, it muſt be ſuch a holineſſe and ſeparation, as that the *ſervice* done to God in thoſe places muſt be accounted and looked upon as a better ſervice, and more acceptable, then if ſo be it had been done elſe-where, more acceptable to God, and advantagious to our ſelves. Now, as places are ſaid to be holy, in regard they are only to be for holy ſervices, ſo,

2. Holy in regard that *holy ſervices* are *only* to be done *there*, with *acceptation* or *advantage*, at leaſt with *ſo great acceptation*. And therefore I deſire you to take notice, that *places* in Scripture were ſaid to be *holy*, which did *ſanctifie* the *Worſhip* which was done in them, and ſanctifie the *Worſhippers*, and ſo the very places are part of worſhip: and ſo not only places *in* which God was worſhipped, but *by* which God was worſhipped. And thus the *Sabbath* was *ſanctifi'd*, and ſo the performance of Gods worſhip therein, made Gods ſervice more acceptable and ſanctifi'd. And ſo the *Altar*, when it was holy, it made the *gift* the more holy and ſanctifi'd, and ſo the more acceptable, the *Altar* ſanctifi'd the *gift*, *Mat.* 23. 18, 19. And ſo the *Incenſe* was acceptable to God, as being put into ſuch a *Cenſer*. And ſo the ſervice done to God in ſuch *Garments* was more acceptable, becauſe done in them which God had *inſtituted* and *appointed* for *Aaron*

and his *Sons* to wear. And ſo I have opened the firſt thing in the explanation, and that is to ſhew you, wherein holineſſe conſiſts, and how it is that places or things may be ſaid to be holy; and I think I have ſufficiently cleared the notion to you.

2. To ſhew, what the *cauſe* or the *foundation* of this holineſſe is; for this, my Brethren, I ſhall deſire you alſo to take notice of it more generally, and then more particularly.

1. More generally, That the cauſe and the foundation of a *place*, or any other *thing's* holineſſe, it is its belonging to God, God's peculiar relation to *it*, and propriety in *it*, declared as he ſhall pleaſe: And therefore to be holy, and to be God's, are words of the like importance, or equivolent, its being God's, and his having a relation to it, is the foundation and cauſe of its holineſſe. And therefore if you look into *Exod.* 13. 2. you ſhall there find God commands, that *they ſhould ſanctifie unto him all the firſt-born, it is mine*; there now is that which is the *cauſe*, and *reaſon*, and *ground* of its being *ſanctified*, or *holy*, it is *God himſelf*, God hath a propriety in it. And therefore I deſire you to look into *Luke* 2. 23. it will open this notion to you; there you ſhall ſee, that this command is again repeated, but yet in other words, and therefore he ſaith, *As it is written in the Law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb ſhall be called holy to the Lord*; that which is ſaid in *one place* to be *ſanctifi'd* or *ſeparated*, is *here ſaid* to be *holy*; and *therefore* holy,

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becauſe ſeparated to God, *Levit.* 27. 30. *All the Tithes of the land is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord*; it is *holy*, and *therefore* holy *becauſe* it is the Lord's. So that here is the general anſwer. This is the foundation, ground and cauſe of its holyneſſe, Gods peculiar propriety in it, it is the Lord's.

2. More particularly, That the declared propriety that God hath in any place, or his relation to a place, or its belonging unto God, that is the foundation of its holineſſe. This belonging unto God, or Gods propriety in it, is declared two wayes.

Its belonging unto God is declared,

1. From his Preſence.
2. From his Precept.

1. By his Preſence. Now the preſence of God that was the foundation of the holineſs of a place, was two fold.

1. Extraordinary.
2. Ordinary.

1. The Extraordinary preſence of God was by his miraculous Apparitions, and diſcovering himſelf by ſome miraculous token, viſion, ſign, or manifeſtation of his preſence, as now here in this *burning, and not conſumed Buſh*; here was a miraculous token of Gods preſence. We ſhall find in the fifth of *Joſhua*, and the laſt verſe, God commands *Joſhua* to *put off his ſhoes, Loſe thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground. And Joſhua did ſo.* And therefore, as I conceive, hence it is, the *Mountain* in which *Chriſt* was *transfigured*, is called, *The holy Moun-*

tain, 2 Pet. 1. 18. *And this voyce which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the Holy Mount.* Why *Holy?* Not as if it were *holy* at that time when the *Apostle* writ *that Epistle*, but it were *manifest*, there was an extraordinary manifestation and sign of Gods presence, and so long as this extraordinary manifestation of Gods presence continued, it was called *holy*. And this miraculous manifestation of the gloriousnesse of Christs Godhead ceasing, the *holinesse* of that place ceased also. And remember this place now, of Gods extraordinary miraculous manifestation of himself in the *Bush*, was *holy* for that time, and no longer, wherein he did manifest himself; for otherwise, in the time of the Law, it were *unholy* to offer up sacrifice there.

2. As the presence of God was extraordinary, so it is ordinary, which is two-fold.

1. The presence of his standing residence in a place, by some visible or external Symbole; or else,

2. The presence of God is a spiritual presence, in the Religious services and performances of his people, in the place of their Meetings and Assemblies. Now concerning the first of these.

1. The presence of God, by the more visible and lasting tokens of his presence, which was chiefly afforded in the time of the Levitical Pedagogue; so the *Altar*, *Temple*, *Ark*, and *Mercy-seat*, were symbols of Gods presence among that people, by them God signified his presence, he recorded his name there by those visible tokens of his

his presence; and therefore the Ark was said to be Gods face: and when the Ark was lifted up, it was said, *Let God arise, and let his Enemies be scattered.* Hence they so much rejoyced when the Ark came into the City of *David*, because it was the sign of Gods presence, and mourned when it was taken away captive. And God is said to *deliver his glory into captivity*; that is, the token of his glorious presence: and as long as this continued, God was looked upon as there present; and thither the people went to pray, and offer Sacrifice. And thus God more fixedly declared his durable relation to a place by these tokens, and while these continued in a place, he was looked upon to be there.

2. Gods ordinary presence is considerable in the Religious services of his People, and this I call the rather the more spiritual presence of God; this is that presence of God in the Ordinances, which we have, we hope, this day, and which Christ did promise, *Matth.* 18. 20. *Wheresoever two or three are met together in my name, there am I present in the midst of them*; not in the midst of the place, but of them, when they do perform holy and institute worship. This spiritual presence of God is that that is afforded in the use of those Ordinances of Praying, Hearing, and Administration of Sacraments; his presence is there to accept of these, and to blesse them, and make them operative, and to assist in these, and to enable both Minister and people to go through their duty by his own power. Nor can Gods presence

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be ordinarily expected, but in this his own way. Now then,

2. You muſt know, that as the preſence of God is the foundation of a places ſanctity, and as it is ſeverall, ſo you muſt know, Gods propriety in, and relation to a place is declared by his Precept: the Precept of God is Gods propriety in a place, as well as his preſence; thus it belongs to him by command to make it holy, he may do what he will, and chooſe out what places he will to be holy. He to whom all things belong, ſurely may have ſome places and things more proper to himſelf and peculiar; ſo the Temple of old, and the Tabernacle, thoſe places of Levitical and Ceremonial worſhip, was ſeparated and ſet apart by God, by Divine Inſtitution. Hence we have many commands.

1. God commands, that ſuch a Houſe, and ſuch a Tabernacle ſhall be built, and this had been unlawfull to do, had it not been commanded.

2. He directs the manner, and the mode, and that all things ſhould exactly be done according to the pattern in the Mount. And,

3. God doth command it ſhould be in ſuch a place, in the thraſhing floor of *Arumnah* the Jebuſite, and that place that himſelf had choſen.

4. He commands that he will be ſerved in theſe places peculiarly, rather then in any other place, he would not have theſe places changed for others. Herein this place typifi'd Chriſt, one that is only able to make our ſervices acceptable. Hence it is

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ſaid, *Exod.* 23. 17. *Three times in the year all the Males ſhall appear before the Lord.* And *Act.* 27. the *Eunuch* there went unto that place that God had commanded.

5. He doth command, that he would have theſe places reverenced, and no civil employments uſed there when the holy ſervice was doing, and that after the ſervice was done, at that very time the place ſhould be only for God.

6. And laſtly, He annexed a promiſe unto that place, that he would accept of a duty done there rather then in any other place, even becauſe it was done there; hence they prayed in the Temple, rather then in their private houſes, *Luke* 2. 27. and when they could not be preſent, by reaſon of Gods providence, in the Temple, if they do but look to the City and the Temple, God accepted of their duty, 1 *Kings* 8. 44, 48. So that God did promiſe, that that place that he had inſtituted for his worſhip and ſervice, that the ſervice performed there ſhould be more acceptable to him then elſe-where. This ſhews the reaſon and foundation of a places holineſſe, the precept of God, and the promiſe and preſence of God. And thus I have opened to you the ſecond thing. Now having thus explained and opened the Queſtion to you.

2. I come to reſolve the Queſtion, according to what I think in my conſcience to be the truth of God; and this I ſhall do two wayes.

1. By granting that which muſt not be denyed.

2. By

2. By denying what muſt not be granted.

1. By granting what muſt not be denyed; and here I grant willingly theſe four things.

1. That in the time of the Goſpel; it is not only lawful, but it is often very commendable and neceſſary, to deſign and dedicate places unto God. Now when I ſay, it is lawful to deſign them, and to dedicate them, I pray you bear me witneſſe, I do not ſay is is lawful to conſecrate them, or to ſanctifie them; but I ſay, it is lawful to deſign and dedicate them. Now for this take notice, that between 1. the deſigning and appointing of a place; 2. the dedication of a place; and 3. the conſecrating of a place, there are theſe differences.

1. Concerning the deſignation of a place; Then is a place deſigned, when it is appointed to be made uſe of for the moſt convenient for ſuch a ſervice, as *Tueſday* and *Wedneſday* may be appointed for Lecture-dayes, not conſecrated. Now you muſt know, that this deſignation of a day may be altered, and ſo may a place; if ſuch a place be deſigned, it is in our power to make uſe of it, ſo as to leave off the uſe of it when we pleaſe.

2. As to dedication, I mean ſo lawfully to dedicate a place, which is of our own right to diſpoſe of; ſo to dedicate it, as not again to be able to revoke it, or call it back from ſuch a uſe and purpoſe. It is lawfull and commendable for a rich man, to dedicate ſo much ground or money, for building a Houſe for a Free-School, or for the poor,

poor, and to give it away from our ſelves, and from our own right and power; and if ſo be that a man hath power or propriety over a place or thing, it is lawful for a man to alienate ſuch a thing. And yet this you muſt know by the way, that this Dedication that now is in the time of the Goſpel, doth very much differ from that dedication of Free-will-offering unto God in the time of the Law; for they were dedicated to God in the time of the Law immediately, that is, to his immediate Worſhip; it was part of Gods Worſhip, it was a part of Religion to do that thing: whereas it is not now dedicated to the immediate worſhip of God, but it is dedicated immediately to ſuch a Pariſh, or Miniſter, or Place, or company of People, that we have a good-will to gratifie; and ſo it more remotely redounds to God's glory, not immediately. For God hath not declared in his Word the ſame acceptation in the Goſpel of things done in an immediate way, as he had in the time of the Law, of which acceptation now we have no ſuch promiſe. And therefore it is obſervable, as one ſpeaks concerning that Benefactor in the Goſpel to the *Jews*, *He hath loved our Nation, and builded us a Synagogue*, it is not ſaid, *for God*; but *for us*; This man out of love to us hath beſtowed theſe things to God; which, though a giving our ſelves out of our own power, yet it doth differ from the Free-will-offering in the time of the Law. Ay, but now, Sirs, ye muſt know, that ſanctification, or conſecration, that is a great deal more; when

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we ſanctifie a thing, or conſecrate a thing, this thing that is ſo conſecrated, it is ſo holy, that there muſt nothing at all of unholineſſe, or of a civil or ſecular employment and concernment be done in it. Now we do not dedicate a thing, but there may be ſecular things in an ordinary and civil way done in them; and our ſervices are not more acceptable for the place, nor the places leſſe holy becauſe of thoſe civil employments. There is the firſt conceſſion, that in the time of the Goſple there may be a deſignment and dedicating of places, and it is not only lawfull but commendable.

2. I grant, that in times of the Goſpel, ſome places are to have Religious ſervices performed in them, rather then in other places; I mean, places of natural conveniency and fitneſſe for the meeting of people together, whereby they may be free from diſturbance, from the violence of Enemies, and from tempeſtuous weather. As publick meetings, whereby we have the ſociety of Gods people, their examples to ſtir us up to zeal, and their joynt help in Prayer and holy performances, to go along with us, that we may joyn our forces together, and with a great force wreſtle with God, and overcome him which is invincible. And therefore, my Brethren, I deſire you to bear me witneſſe this day, that I plead for publick Ordinances, and for the purity of Gods Ordinances to be adminiſtred in publick places, rather then other places, ſo that I do here profeſſe, that I do avowedly and openly

declare

declare my judgement to be for publick meetings in publick places, and the purity of God's Ordinances, if they may be enjoyed without humane mixture, which may hurt and pollute them.

3. I grant, that in the time of holy ſervice, we are not then to uſe ſecular employments at that time in thoſe places, as eating, drinking, and talking, it being unſuitable to the work in hand and howſoever they may be lawfull at another time, yet unlawfull then, becauſe againſt the Apoſtles command, *Let all things be done in decency, and in order*; and that which is unſuitable to the commands of God, the taking his Name in vain. My Brethren, I will go further with you, we are to abſtain from all other Religious ſervices, when not in ſeaſon; and therefore when the Miniſter is in Preaching, we muſt not run into our places and kneel down, as ſome people do, and fall a Praying. And I cannot but wonder, that they that do ſo much cry up Uniformity and Sanctity of places, that yet they ſhould confute their judgment by their practice, that they ſhould pray ſecretly when the whole Congregation is a praying vocally; and it may be the Congregation is ſinging a Pſalm, or the Miniſter Preaching, and then they go to their Prayers; I pray where is the Uniformity, Decency, and Order they ſo much ſtand for?

Laſtly, I grant, that after the performances of holy duties, in places wherein we meet for the worſhip and ſervice of God, it is our duty to abſtain,

ſtain, not onely from filthy and indecent actions of a natural or moral filthineſſe, unſeemly, as looked upon by men againſt God's Law; but from all thoſe civil, moral, lawfull actions, at other times, that may reflect any diſhonor upon the work that hath been done, or upon the work that ſhall be done, or that may render the place unmeet for religious ſervices afterwards: And this is that that one calls a Negative, or a Privative reverence, a reverence, or not doing ſomething, not becauſe the place is more holy, but for decency and order, conſidering the religious duties performed in that place. So that things ſubſervient to Religion call for a Negative reverence, and are not ſo to be uſed, as that the Religious ſervices which are there performed and tranſacted, ſhould be made diſgraceful and diſhonorable; as the Bread of the Sacrament, after the Sacrament is done, is not lawfull to be caſt unto unreaſonable creatures, becauſe it reflects diſhonor upon the religious ſervice which we were before doing; ſo, dirty water is not to be put into the Communion Cup, not that the Cup is holy, but becauſe it is a reflection of diſgrace upon that holy ſervice wherein that Cup is made uſe of; and that Cup is not to be made uſe of to drunkenneſſe. But in all this bear me witneſſe that I ſay, all this is but a civil reverence, and ſo due to any place where there is any honorable Convention, as in the Parliament-houſe, or Preſence-Chamber, or the like. Having yielded this.

2, I

2. I muſt come now to deny what muſt not be granted; and I likewiſe deny four things.

1. It is not now in the times of the Goſpel in any mans power to ſet apart a place for Religious duties, ſo as that it ſhould be unlawfull upon a due occaſion to uſe it for civil imployments, or that it ſhould be alwayes unlawfull to alienate to other uſes, beſides thoſe uſes that are Divine; the Bread and Wine ſanctified by Gods own inſtitution by the Miniſter, after the publick uſe and adminiſtration of them in the Ordinance, are not only holy, but they may be eaten in a civil uſe and way as our ordinary and common food: The Synagogues among the Jews were as holy as our Churches, they were for holy duties, as Prayer, Preaching, and the like, and dedicated to Gods Worſhip, and yet you muſt know there were civil imployments uſed in thoſe places after the Religious Worſhip was done; and therefore in *Mat.* 23. 34. ſaith our Saviour, *ſome of them you ſhall ſcourge in your Synagogues.* Hence we uſe to keep Courts and Conſiſtories in Churches amongſt us, and ſome of them none of the beſt, and we uſe here among us in this City conſtantly in our Churches, (and I doubt not but it is lawfull) for an Alderman in his Ward to meet about ſecular buſineſſe, as to chooſe Common-Council-men, or the like. But where there hath been a dedication of a place to Gods worſhip, it is only God that can make it ſo holy, as that it ſhould be ſinfull to imploy it to other uſes, and if the Governours of the Church upon due occaſion and reaſon ſhall ſubſtitute other places more fit

then the former for Divine Worſhip, then the *former* places may return to their former proper uſes; but it is not ſo in things conſecrated by God; If the Font, Table, or Pulpit waxe old, they may be laid aſide and looked upon as common things, and may be uſed for other imployments; and ſuppoſe the Surpliſſe be a lawfull garment in Gods worſhip, (which yet I am perſwaded none of you believe) doubtleſſe it is not to be burned when it is old and paſt wearing, and the aſhes put into a pot or ſome ſuch like thing, and be buried under the Altar, but it may be uſed as other linnen may. And ſo the common Utenſils, as the Cup, and the like, when they are come to be old, they may be uſed for other imployments without fear of ſin. And therefore it is an excellent ſpeech of one; ſaith he, So to Conſecrate moveable or immoveable goods, as that it ſhould be a ſin for the Church to uſe them in any ſecular imployments, it is an execrable and abominable Superſtition: God hath not Conſecrated any thing in the Goſpel *ſo*, as that it is a *ſin* to uſe it otherwiſe. It was a ſin in them to make uſe of the Cups in the Temple in any ſecular way, but it is not ſo for us: the reaſon is, becauſe thoſe things were ſet apart by Gods own Inſtitution: but there can be nothing ſo Conſecrated by men, as that it may *not be made uſe of* in ſecular things without ſin.

2. A ſecond thing I deny is, That no place now in the time of the Goſpel hath ſuch an holineſſe either from Inſtitution or Uſe, as to ſanctifie or make more acceptable or effectual the ſervices therein

therein performed: This is not in the time of the Goſple; God is preſent at places of Religious performances, not with reſpect unto the Place, but the Performance by him inſtituted and injoyned; and therefore he doth not ſay, *Where two or three are met together I will be in the midſt of that place*, but *among them*. God will be preſent in the place for the Duties ſake, not among them for the Places ſake, but the Duties ſake in the place, to bleſſe the Ordinance for his own Inſtitutions ſake. Prayers and other Duties in the Ceremonial Law were regarded for the places ſake, but now we muſt abhor this piece of *Judaiſme*: For a man to ſet a place apart by Conſecration, that this place makes the duty any thing the more excellent or acceptable to God, this is to make the Traditions of men equal to the Inſtitution of God. The Temple ſanctified the duty, but not the Synagogue; and the Altar did ſanctifie the gift, and the perſon, and ſervice, becauſe it was by Gods Inſtitution, and ſo the Temple and Altar did adde efficacy and worth to the work; but for men to Conſecrate the Church, it is to make the Appointment of men equal with the Inſtitution of God. Our Churches and Meeting-places are not holy (if they be holy at all) without relation to the duties performed, but our duties are holy without relation to the Church or the place. None but God can conſecrate a place to be an effectual means of worſhip: The Jews worſhipped God *by* the Temple, but we worſhip God *in* the Church; as the place doth afford a natural con-

veniency for our meeting together; the place then hath no influence at all upon our duties, and if any of you ſhould think ſo, you erre exceedingly: It is but only a *Phyſical* Act of duty, or a natural *Adjunct* of duty, which is but at moſt helpfull to the bodies conveniency.

3. The third thing I deny is this, That there is no place *ſo* holy as to exclude another place from being *as* holy in a way of proper ſanctity and holineſſe, which we have been now opening. God now makes not one place properly more holy then another; there is not now properly any religious difference of places. We have not now the Precept of God to ſanctifie and ſeparate one place from another, to prefer one place before another; we have not now the miraculous preſence of God, his appearing as at the buſh. God hath not given *us* under the *Goſpel* thoſe Symbols of his ſtanding preſence and reſidency, as by the *Ark*, and *Mercy-Seat*, and *Altar* of old he *gave* unto *his people*. And as for his Ordinances, if they make a place holy in regard of performance of duty to God there, and his ſpiritual preſence in that place, then my Parlour, Chamber, or Cloſet are holy where I uſe to pray, and where God doth afford his aſſiſting bleſſing and comforting preſence: So that if you make the Spirituall preſence of God to make a thing holy, in regard of Gods Spiritual preſence going along with thoſe ſervices, then your *Houſes* are holy, and the *Field* is holy where you *walk* when you *meditate*, and *praying* by the *River* ſide makes it holy; Humane conſecration makes no

place

place truly holy. If the ſpiritual preſence of Chriſt makes one place more holy then another, *then* the *Communion-Table* and *Font* are more holy then *another* place in the *Temple*. And ſo when Gods preſence hath been enjoyed at the *Font*, that is more holy then the *Communion Table*; and ſo when the preſence of God hath been enjoyed at at the *Communion-Table* that is more holy then the *Font*, and ſo you muſt bring in *Judaiſme*. If the preſence of God makes a thing holy; *a new Communion-Table* upon which the Sacrament was never adminiſtred, cannot be *ſo* holy as the *old Table*. Nay, by *this* the *mouths* of the Communicants are holy, having eaten the *Bread* and drank the *Wine* which was dedicated to an holy uſe, and ſo it will be ſinfull for you to eat any other food. I conclude all with this, That the difference and holineſſe of religious places in the times of the Goſpel, is not given but taken away by the Goſpel. 1. Tim. 2, 8. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* You may pray, and that with as much acceptableneſſe to God in *one* place as in *another*. John 4. 21. Chriſt ſaith, *The time comes when you ſhall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at Jeruſalem, worſhip the Father*: That is, Gods worſhip and ſervice ſhall not be *confined* and *limited* to *thoſe* places, as if others were not as *good* and *holy* as they. 1. Cor. 1. 2. *To them that are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord both theirs and ours.* *One* place for the calling upon Chriſt is as good as *another*, and therefore,

Where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midſt of them And this is foretold in *Zeph.*2 11. and in *Mal.* 1. 11. So that *this* is the *ſum* of all, Gods inſtitution makes the Sabbath holy: And the Bread and the Wine ſet apart by Gods own Inſtitution, *after* the *duty*, may be uſed in *ſecular* uſes. But laſtly, to name no more, no place is ſo ſanctified by God, as that after the ceaſing of that preſence of God, any holineſſe ſhould belong unto it, as now when the ſigns of Gods preſence ceaſed and was gone, the holineſſe of that place was gone, and *then* it was *lawfull* for *Moſes* to *put on his ſhoes*. And ſo when Gods preſence ceaſed in the *Ark*, the *Altar*, and *Mercy-ſeat*, the places became no other then ſecular and civil. And now for *us* to go about (as the *Papiſts* do) a Pilgrimage to *Jeruſalem*, as if that place had any more holineſſe then others, is a fooliſh and abominable thing: How many bloody Battels have been fought, to the diſgrace, as well as loſſe of Chriſtianity, for the re-gaining of the Holy-land.

Nay let me adde, *thoſe* places where the preſence of God hath been formerly, when it hath been taken away, and thoſe places have been uſed to Idolatry, they are the worſe, and the more unholy; for this is turning the Houſe of God into vanity.

The concluſion of all is this: whatever places are in holy duties, out of them they looſe and leave all their holineſſe, and therefore I ſay it is boldneſſe for us to go about to tye Gods preſence to a place where God hath never tyed it, I cannot but wonder how it is poſſible for men of reaſon

reaſon and learning to be ſo blind, as to hold that the Lords day (which was ſet apart by God for the Sabbath, as you may ſee in the fourth Commandment, and afterwards by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which doth amount to no leſſe then an Inſtitution) is not holy after the Service or Sermon is ended, but then you may go to play at Foot-ball, and Cudgels, and Drinking, and what not, and yet that they ſhould ſay, that the place of performing religious duties in, is ſo holy after religious performances, as that you cannot come into it without bowing the knee, and putting off the hat, and bowing to the Altar and Communion Table, and the like, this I cannot apprehend how it ſhould be, and I wiſh any of you that are of this minde, would in private give me your reaſons for it, why it ſhould be ſo.

Now having explain'd the point, and given you a reſolution of the queſtion, in theſe particulars, give me leave to wind up all with ſome Uſes.

Firſt, We infer the great difference that is between ſanctity of places under the Old Teſtament, and ſanctity and holineſſe of places under the New Teſtament: they under the Old Teſtament had the immediate preſence of God, the ſtanding Symbols and viſible ſignes of his preſence, ſo long as theſe laſted: which was ſet apart by Gods ſpecial Commandment, and ſo they were holy, though they were not imployed in a way of worſhip, but you cannot ſay ſo now, our places for performance of holy duties have no ſuch holineſſe, places now differ from places then.

Secondly, by way of Inference, I note the great

goodneſſe of God to give us ſuch a ſweet and gracious indulgent diſpenſation in the time of the Goſpel under the New Teſtament, as that he doth not tye us to Ceremonies or places; he doth not bind us as he did the Jews, to go three times in the year to the furthermoſt part of the Nation to worſhip: No my Brethren, no Land, no ground is now unholy, as famous old Dr. *Raynolds* ſaid, every place is now a *Judea*, no Coaſt but is a *Judea*, every houſe is a *Jeruſalem*, every Congregation is now a *Zion*: ſee here the goodneſſe of God in indulging of us ſo far as to take any ſervice done by us in a ſolemn and real manner, as if it had been done in thoſe places which were formerly appointed for it to be done in.

Thirdly, I infer henoe, there are ſeveral perſons to be reproved.

1. We find hereby that all the holineſſe of reliques of Saints doth fall to the ground: and we ſee the folly of thoſe that make Pilgrimages unto Saints and reliques as the Papiſts do: there was a time (ſay they) when ſuch a Saints reliques were laid up in ſuch a place, and theſe are more holy then other places; ſo that this you ſee falls to the ground in it ſelf: I might tell you concerning their lying about their reliques, as one ſaid, that there were as many reliques as would fill an hundred Carts: but ſuppoſing ſo, all that would not make the place the more holy.

2. Hence the Superſtition of thoſe is to be reproved, which put holineſſe in places of burial, and make it more holy to be buried in one place then in another: it is more holy (ſay they) to be

be buried in the Church then in the Church-yard, and more holy under the communion Table then any other part of the Church.

3 This reproves them which cannot pray any where but in the Temple, and they that uſe private prayer in Churches: If you have houſes and rooms at home, what is the reaſon that if *Pauls* or any other Church ſtand open you muſt run in thither, and drop down behind a Pillar to ſay your Prayers?

4 This reproves them that have reverence towards any place more then another, as if they did deſerve more holineſſe in one part then in another, as bowing to the Altar or Communion Table, or the like.

5 It reproves thoſe that have reverence for ſcituation of theſe places, they muſt ſtand East and Weſt, and why not North and South? all theſe things fall off like fig leaves; If what I have ſaid be true, that there is no holineſſe in places, and this I have made known to you not only as my judgement, but as my duty.

Now for Exhortation, I ſhall deſire you to take notice of four things, and I have done, and ſhall leave you to God, and commit you to the word of his grace. If this be ſo, that there is no holineſſe in places, then firſt of all be the more encouraged to ſerve God in your families, in thoſe places where God hath ſet you, where God is as well pleaſed with your ſervice as in publick places; ſerve God upon your knees with devotion, humility and revereuce. And therefore, though

I am against Superstition, and Popish practises, and those wicked cursed traps of Innovations, that the men of the world have disturbed the Church of God with; yet I am against putting on your hats in prayer, and sitting in prayer. Those that are for holiness of places, do not, with *Abraham*, in every place they come build God an Altar. But let *us* in every closet and room build God an Altar; let no morning nor evening go without a prayer in thy family, pray often, and pray continually, let your houses be as so many Churches, as you read in *Rom* 16. 5. *Likewise greet the Church that is in their house*: and in the second verse of *Philemon*'s Epistle, *To the Church that is in thy house*; there the houses of the Saints are called Churches. This will bring a blessing upon your families: And if you be not willing to have that curse denounced against you, (in *Jer.* 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name*) then neglect not family prayers; be much in prayer, and pray with frequency and encouragement, because God binds you to no place. ——

The second Exhortation is this, Labour to promote *personal holiness*, as well as *family devotion*: I am against local holiness: As one said (that I heard once when I was a youth) Happy are those garments that can carry away any of the *dust* of the Temple; but they think not that many of their garments are unclean in wallowing n the mire of sin. But I say, do you labour to promote holiness in your lives, in your hearts and

and converſations. The *holy Ghoſt* ſaith, *Unleſſe you be pure in heart, you ſhall not ſee God.* And therefore put away ſin, for if you regard iniquity, God will not hear your prayers: It is not your ducking, or bowing, or cringing, never ſo much, or your going with your hat off through the Church, that will make God hear your prayers; theſe will but diſhonour you, becauſe you live not accordingly.

5. Love the holineſſe of the living members, be not ſo much in love with the holineſs of wood and timber, bricks and ſtones; but whereſoever you ſee the Image of Chriſt, be in love with that ſoul; where ever the preſence of God ſhines, and whereever thou ſeeſt one that gives up himſelf to God in holy duties, do thou ſay, Oh! my ſoul, delight to come into the company of theſe men. *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour.* If there be a heaven upon earth, I tell you it is in the company of godly men. I remember a famous man hath this expreſſion, ſaith he, When I was in the company of the Saints and people of God, I was as a living coal; but when I was ſeparated from them, and was among the wicked, ſwearers and drunkards, me-thoughts there was a ſpiritual coldneſſe and frozenneſs went over my ſoul: Though the people of God are beſt company in heaven, yet they are very good company here on earth: And Chriſtians ſhould ſtirre up one another, and be provoking one another to love and good workes; and where ever you have grace, be ſure to impart it. Endeavour to love the holineſſe of

Saints,

Saints, and be willing to impart your experiences to others, for this is your duty. Do not make a Monopoly of holineſs, but carry company with you to heaven.

Laſtly, to name no more, labour to preſerve the holineſs of God's *true Inſtitutions*, thoſe things which are of a divine conſecration. What is *humane* conſecration without *divine* inſtitution? The *Sabbath day* is of *divine* inſtitution, labour to keep it holy; this is a *holy-day* indeed, and *this* labour to keep your families from profaning of; but for other *holy-dayes* and *holy things*, they are much alike for *holineſs*: The Lords day is a holy day indeed, and for ſhame do not let your children gad abroad on this day. Truly, I do verily believe, that though here be a great company of people in the Congregation, yet they are but a handfull in compariſon of what are drinking in Ale-houſes, and whoring, and walking in the field, that one can hardly get home to their houſe for the crowd of people that are going thither. For ſhame let not *this* be told in *Gath*, nor publiſhed in *Askelon*. What! ſhall we ſtand up for the holineſs of *places*, and yet oppoſe the holineſs of the *Lords day*, which God hath enjoyned and inſtituted? Oh! that the *Magiſtrates* of *London*; Oh! that *Englands King*; Oh! that *Englands Parliament* would do ſomething for the reformation of this, to oppoſe wickedneſs and prophaneneſſe, which will otherwiſe bring upon *us* the judgement of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and make us guilty and worthy of a thouſand puniſhments

And

And labour by prayer in your families to overcome that flood of prophaneneſſe, which you cannot by your ſtrength prevent. And then for the Sacraments of Chriſt, *Baptiſm* and the *Lords Supper*, theſe are Ordinances of Gods appointment, they are holy, and therefore ſhould not be given to thoſe that are unholy; and yet thoſe who are ſo much for the holineſſe of places, do not care who come to the Sacrament; if they have but a noſe on their face, they ſhall come and partake of the Ordinances, let them be what they will; this is to prefer mans inſtitution before Gods inſtitution. And then for the Lords Meſſage and Word, that is a holy thing, and therefore love his Meſſengers: the Meſſengers of God delivering his Meſſage with fear and reverence, you are to hear them with the ſame fear and reverence, and reſolution to be holy, as if Chriſt were preſent. And for the Word of God, it is not enough for you to have a choice Sentence written upon the walls of your Churches, but let Gods Law be written in your hearts and conſciences, and practiſed in your lives, that all the world may ſee you live as men dedicated to the true God, in all the duties of his wayes and obedience. Many of theſe things might have been inlarged. What I have given you with the right-hand, I pray you, Chriſtians, do not take with the left, for if you do, you will make your ſelves guilty of a double ſin.

1. Becauſe you do not obey the truth you hear.

And 2. For putting a wrong conſtruction upon it.

But

But I have better hopes of you, my Beloved Hearers, and hope that the Lord will be better unto your ſouls then his *Miniſters*, then his *Word*, or *any thing* elſe can be. God bleſſe you and his Ordinances, and diſcover his mind and will at this time to you.

The End of the Eleventh Sermon.

London Miniſters Legacy.

SERMON XII.

Phil 4. 1. Mr Lyc.

Therefore my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

MY Beloved, I do very well remember, that upon the 24. of this instant Month 1651. I was then under the sentence of Banishment, and that very day did I preach my *farwell-Sermon* to my people from whom I was banished, because I would not swear against my King, having sworn to maintain his just Power, Honor and Greatness; and now behold a second tryal: Then I could not forswear my self, the God of Heaven keep me that I never may. I am apt to think I could do any thing for this loving Congregation, onely I cannot sin. But since beloved, there is a sentence gone out against us, that we that cannot *subscribe*, must not *subsist*; this is the last day that is prefix'd to us to preach; I shall now speak to you (*God* assisting me if my passion wil give me leave

just

Just as if I would speak if I were immediately to die; therefore hearken my *Brethren*, *dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.* *Paul* was now a Prisoner at *Rome* for the Gospel of Christ; 'twas his second imprisonment; and he was not far from being offered up a sacrifice for the Gospel he had preached. This Gospel the *Philippians* had heard him preach; and the godly *Philippians* having heard of his imprisonment, they so far, from *Philippi* to *Rome*, to visit him, and to supply his wants; a gracious temper, which I hope the eternal God hath given the Saints in *London*, and for which, if for any thing, God hath a blessing in store for them. *Paul* is not so much concern'd in his own bands, as in the *Philippians* Estate. *Epaphroditus* tells him that there were Heresies and false doctrines got in amongst them, but yet the *Philippians* stood fast; and herein *Paul* rejoices, writes this Epistle, bids them go on, stand fast, keep their ground, & to be sure not to give an inch, but to stand fast, knowing that at a long run *their labour should not be vain in the Lord.*

I shall without any more ado enter upon the Text; in which you have two things considerable.

A most melting *Compellation*, and a most serious *Exhortation*.

1. A melting *Compellation*, *My Brethren, dearly beloved*, &c.

2. A serious *Exhortation*, and in it 1. the *matter* of the duty, stand, and stand it out, and stand fast. 2. The *manner*, 1. *So*, stand so as you have stood, stand fast, 2. *In the Lord*, stand so, and stand in the Lord, in the Lords strength, and in the Lords Cause; to stand in

your

your own ſtrength, would be the ready way to fall and to ſtand in your own cauſe, for your own fancy, would be the ready way to expoſe your ſelves to all manner of temptations: *Therefore my Brethren, dearly beloved in the Lord, ſtand, and ſo ſtand faſt in the Lord my dearly beloved.*

In the next place, by way of obſervation from the words; and if there be any wicked catchers here, let them know, that I ſhall ſpeak no more than I ſhall draw from, and is the mind of my Text; I would not give occaſion to be a greater ſufferer than I am like to be. But for the words.

Firſt, for the *melting Compellation*, *My Brethren, my dearly beloved.* *Paul* was an Apoſtle, and an high Officer in the Church of God, and he writ unto the *Philippians*, to *all* the *Philippians*, to the pooreſt of them, and ſee how he beſpeaks himſelf unto them, *my Brethren*: From hence take this obſervation, *That the higheſt Officers in the Church of Chriſt, though they are indeed by office Rulers over them, yet by relation they are no more than brethren to the meaneſt Saint.* Here we have no ſuch Rabbies to whom we muſt ſwear, becauſe they ſay we muſt ſwear it. *Paul* calls them *Brethren*, and ſo writes to them, *Col.* 1. 2. and *James* a Scriptural Officer, one of the higheſt Apoſtles Chriſt ever made, ſaith, *Hearken my beloved Brethren*, Jam. 2. 5. ſo *Peter* an Apoſtle of Chriſt, *Wherefore the rather Brethren*; and *John* the beloved Diſciple, *Brethren, I write no new Commandment*, &c. 1 John 2. 7. Well then,

1. If this be ſo, that the higheſt officer in the church of Chriſt, ſuch as Chriſt approves of, are but *brethren*

to the meaneſt Saint; then certainly *they are but brethren to their fellow-Officers*: If no more relation to the toe in the body, then no more to the eies. If there be any of a light ſpirit would bear rule, that love to have the preheminence, I would deſire them to read 2. Scriptures; the firſt is *Luke* 22.26 the ſecond *Mat.* 20,26,27. doth Chriſt ſay, *Whoſoever will be chief among you, let him be* one that will domineer over your eſtates, over your perſons, over your conſciences, doth not Chriſt ſay ſo? no, but *whoſoever will be chief among you, let him be your Miniſter, ----let him be your ſervant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſome for many.* You have this alſo *Luke* 22. 25. *And he ſaid unto them, the Kings of the Gentiles exerciſe Lordſhip over them, i.e.* over their ſlaves, over their vaſſals; *but ye ſhall not be ſo; but he that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve.* Sure if *Paul* be but a *brother* to *Philip*, then he is no more to *Timothy*.

2. If the higheſt officers in the Church of Chriſt be but Brethren to the meaneſt Saint, then 'tis not for thoſe Brethren to *Lord it* over their *fellow-brethren*, Lord it *over God's Heritage*: Remember, 'tis *Gods Heritage*. I hope your conſciences will bear me witneſs, that I have laboured as much as in me lies, to be *a helper of your joy*, not to *Lord it over your Faith*, 2 Cor. 1.24. to preſs or cauſe you to believe this or that becauſe I believe it: if this be allow'd, then may I turn *Papiſt* to morrow. Saith Chriſt to him that would have had him ſpeak to his brother to *divide the inheritance with him*, *Man who made me a Judge over you?* Luke

12.14

12. 14. So ſay I, Man who made thee a Tyrant, a Lord over thy Fellow-brethren, 1 *Pet.* 5 3. *Neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, &c.*

3. If the higheſt Officers in the Church of Chriſt be but Brethren, and no more, then there ſhould be no *diſcord between thoſe brethren. Behold how good and how pleaſant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity* And truly I may comfortably ſpeak that, and 'tis one of the greateſt comforts I have in the world. I hope we have liv'd together in love, bleſſed be God; Let us not fall out, ſaith *Abraham* the elder, to *Lot* his younger couſin, for we are bretbren. Beloved, the diſcords between Paſtor and people, have made the beſt Muſick in the ears of the Jeſuits.

4. Are Paſtors, nay the higheſt Officers that Jeſus Chriſt hath, and doth own in his Church, but Brethren? oh! then let thoſe brethren, if they will appear before the bar of their Father in Heaven with comfort, *take care of offending the ſouls of their Brethren*; for at the hand of every brother, God wil require the ſoul of his Brother. Ez. 33 6. *His blood will I require at the Watchmans hand.* We that are called by ſome the *dogs of the Flock*, what ſhall we prove *dumb dogs*? What a comfort wil it be to my dying brethren this day, if they can but ſay, Lord we are clear from the blood of our Brethren? The Officers of Chriſt ſhould never behave themſelves ſo, that they ſhould give their people occaſion to ſay, We are brethren to Dragons. But *Jer.* 9 4. *Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, &c.* I would commend one Scripture to all my Brethren in the Miniſtry, 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. A Scripture that I would have writ in letters of gold on

the lintel-posts of all Ministers doors: *Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world stands, lest I make my brother to offend.* Rather then to endanger his soul, I'le away with all these toys and gew gaws.

2. From the terms of deareſt affection, *dearly beloved, longed for, &c.* Take this obſervation, that, *It becomes the higheſt Miniſters, much more the loweſt, to bear a moſt tender, vehement, ardent, ſtrong, melting affection, towards that flock or people that God hath committed to their charge.* Thus *Paul* to the *Philippians* in the text, my Brethren *dearly beloved, &c.* You ſhal find *Paul* in all his Epiſtles, in a thawing frame to his people, melting in love unto them: the *Corinthians* were ſo in his heart, not only to live with them, but if God called him to die for them, ſo abundantly did he love them, 2*Cor.* 12. 15. That he would *very gladly ſpend* and *be ſpent for them*, carried them in his heart, and longed after them *all.* As for the *Theſſalonians*, 1*Theſ.* 2 8. He as a Nurſe, tendreth and nouriſheth them as children: and is ſo affectionately deſirous of them, that he is willing *to impart to them not only the Goſpel, but his own Soul*, becauſe they were dear to him. Then

1. Is this ſo, ought the Paſtor ſo to love their people? give me leave to beſpeak you in the words of *Job* (in reſpect of thoſe hundreds of Miniſters, that are to be plucked from their people:) *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, oh ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*, *Job* 19. 21. What wil nothing ſerve but plucking out our very eies? our very heart, (being ſo much the objects of the peoples love,) How ſad is it for the Father to be pluckt from

from the child, the ſhepheard from the flock, the nurſe from the child, this is a Lamentation, and ought to be for a Lamentation: that there muſt be a parting between *David* and *Jonathan*, who loved one another as their own Souls, this cuts them unto their very heart. And this I may ſay with reſpect to my ſelf, I bleſs God, I cannot ſay as ſhe of her husband, *a bloody huſband haſt thou bin unto me, but a loving congregation* have you been uuto me. I know none of you have deſired my deſtruſtion, nor to taint my name; never did *I* hear three in this Congregation ſpeak of preſſing any thing againſt me, that was contrary to my conſcience: nor can *I* ſay, that there are four in this Pariſh that did ever deny to pay me my *legal dues*, bleſſed be God for ſuch a people, you have not encroached upon my conſcience, as *I* hope *I* have not upon yonrs. Paſtors muſt love their people, do not blame them if their hearts be almoſt broken, when they are to part with ſuch a people.

2 Muſt the Paſtor love his people? then, *the people muſt love their Paſtor.* 'Tis true, it lyes in the power of man to ſeparate the Paſtor and people, but not to ſeparate their hearts; *I* hope there wil never be a ſeperation of love, but that wil ſtil continue: if we do not ſee one another, yet we may love one another & pray for one another; *I* hope a husband doth not ceaſe from loving his wife becauſe ſhe is *abſent* from him. But oh! for my Brethren, hundreds of them think that you are undone, though you cannot ſee as far as other men, you may live in love, and keep your conſciences quiet.

3, Muſt Paſtors love their Peopel? then you ſee

from

from hence, *what ſhould be the grand object of the Paſtors affection*, i. e. the people; not what the people have; this is great inquiry, what is the benefice worth? What's the preferment? Do they pay well, &c. Whereas we ſhould not ſeek ſo much the *Fleece* as the *Flock*, we ſhould not take overſight of a Congregation for *love* of their *pay*, but of their *ſouls*; nor, tis an excellent good living, as one ſaid I have heard of, *Let me have their Tythes, and let their ſouls go to the Devil*; but as the Apoſtle, *I ſeek not yours, but you*, 2 Cor. 12, 14. And I hope there be many hundreds can ſay, it hath been the peoples ſouls they have more loved and affected, than any thing what the people had.

4. Once more, we muſt love them, and love them tenderly. Why, and yet leave them? Yes my beloved, We are ſo to love our people as to venture anything for them but our own damnation. I come not here to throw firebrands. I bleſs God I have a moſt tender affection for all my Brethren in the Miniſtry; and though I am not ſatisfied my ſelf, yet I condemn no man, I believe there be many of them do as conſcienciouſly ſubſcribe, as deny to ſubſcribe. I proteſt in the fear of God *I* cannot ſubſcribe; perhaps it is becauſe *I* have not that light as others have; for he *that doubts* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is damned*: My beloved, *I* hope you would not have us ſin againſt God and our Conſciences. *It* is not my *living* that *I* deſire, but my *office* to ſerve my Lord & Maſter; but if we ſhould (to keep communion with you) loſe our communion with God, this is the ready way to have all our labour and pains loſt; but as *David* ſaid (and oh that I could ſpeak it with as good hopes as *David*) *Zadock, carry back*

back the Ark of God, if I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it and his habitation: but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him. 2. *Sam.* 15. 24. Brethren, I could do very much for the love I bear to you, but I dare not ſin? I know they wil tell you, this is pride & peeviſhneſs in us, & that we have preacht againſt it, & are tender of our reputation, and we would fain all be B ſhops; & forty things more: but the Lord be witneſs between them & us in this. Beloved, I prefer my wife & children before a blaſt of ayr of peoples talk; I am very ſenſible what it is to be reduced to a morſel of bread: Let the God of heaven & earth do what he wil with me, if I could have ſubſcribed with a good conſcience, I would, I would do any thing to keep my ſelf in the work of God, but to ſin againſt my God, I dare not do it.

3. *My joy and Crown*, therefore my dearly beloved & longed for, my *joy & Crown*, my preſent joy and future crown: my joy which I value more then a crown, my principle joy. Hence obſerve this doctrine, that, *The fixed ſtanding floriſhing growth of Saints in Goſpel practice, and Goſpel obedience, is, or ought to be matter of tranſcendent joy to their Paſtors.* It was ſo to the Apoſtle *Paul*; *Paul* heard how they ſtood: though there was a plague amongſt them, yet they were not infected; & though hee was in the gaol ready to be beheaded, yet this was his joy & crown, that his people did ſtand, & I hope my brethren it wil be our joy & crown to hear of your ſtanding & growth in Goſpel knowledg, & Goſpel profeſſion. And

1. If

1. If this be ſo, as *John* ſaid, I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in the truth: it ſhould be the praiers and endeavors of all Paſtors really to love the ſouls of their people, & to pray for them: that when they cannot look after the ſouls of their children, yet that good nurſes may be looked out for them. What a joy was it that *Moſes* mother was made his nurſe; and who can tell, it may be thought not out of any merit of ours, yet of their own clemency our governours may give us to be nurſes over our own children: but if I cannot nurſe my child my ſelf, *I* will wiſh it well, and as good a nurſe as I can: far be it, that thoſe that are to ſucceed ſhould not proſper: Lord it ſhall be the prayers of thy ſervant, that thoſe that are to ſucceed may have a double and treble portion of thy ſpirit, that he may be both painfull and faithfull *&c.*

2. *If* the peoples growth in grace & knowledge be matter of joy to a faithful Paſtour? then what do you think of thoſe that *hinder their thriving.* I ſhall give you two Scriptures *John* 12. 19. *The Phariſees therefore ſaid among themſelves,* (they durſt not ſpeak publickly, but who was it againſt? why, it was againſt Chriſt) *perceive ye how ye prevail nothing, behold the world is gon after him.* But we wil order him for that, we will be ſure to leſſen his Congregation; if we cannot do that, we wil ſhut the doors againſt him, ſee *Mat.* 23. 13. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, Hypocrites, for ye ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt men*: What! ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt men? What the *Phariſees*! that pretended they had the *Keys* of *Heaven*, and to be the

guides? I, that is it, becauſe there is not room enough in heaven for us & them too? no ſaith Chriſt, there is no ſuch matter; *For ye neither go in your ſelves, neither ſuffer ye them that are entring, to go in.* I dare not tell you at this time what it is to *ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt men*, you may better imagine it than I can ſpeak it; but this did the Phariſees, *they would not go in themſelves, nor ſuffer them that were entring to go in.* I remember when I was a Child we had ſuch a Miniſter that would one Lords-day preach up holineſs, and the next Lords day would preach againſt the practice of holineſs.

And now my Brethren, I am come in the next place to ſpeak to the laſt part, *ſtand faſt*; and becauſe I ſee a Hurricane a coming, *keep your ground, ſtand faſt*, and live in the Lord here, that you may live with him hereafter.

Wherefore

PHIL. 4. 1.

Therefore my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.

FRom this Scripture you have had these three Doctrines: 1. *That the highest Officers of the Church of Christ, though they are Rulers of them, yet they are but brethren to the meanest Saint.* 2. *That it becomes a true Scriptural Minister of Christ, to have a most vehement, ardent, strong, melting, tender affection to that Flock or People which the Providence of God hath committed to his charge.* 3. *That the fixed, standing, flourishing, and thriving of that Flock in the profession and practice of Gospel-knowledge and obedience, is matter of transcendent joy and triumph to such a godly Pastor.* The 4th. which is that *I* would now prosecute, is this, *That it is the grand and indispensible duty of all sincere Saints, in the most black and shaking seasons, to stand fast, fixed and stedfast in the Lord.*

This is the grand thing St. *Paul* had to say to his *Philippians* when he was ready to have his head cut off, for so it was, he was beheaded for the testimony of Jesus: this is all he had to say when in Jayle, when in bonds, and that under Heathen *Romans*; you are now my Joy, you are now my Crown, oh! do but stand, and my joy, which is but two notes above *Gamut*, wil

get

get to *Ela*. Oh! do but ſtand, and my Crown's ſtudded with Diamonds: We live if you ſtand, though we dye when you ſtand. *It is the great and indiſpenſible duty*, &c. Whether theſe are *black* and *ſhaking ſeaſons*, I have nothing to ſay, but I am wholly now upon your duty, beloved; and for God's ſake let the words of a *Civilly dying Miniſter* prevail with you. There is a kind of a Maxim among ſome, that in caſe a perſon dye ſeemingly, & revive again, that the laſt words that was heard of that perſon when in a rational temper, are the only things that that perſon wil remember when brought to life again. It is moſt probable beloved, what ever others may think, but in my opinion (God may work wonders) neither you nor I ſhall ever ſee the faces of, or have a word more to ſpeak to one another til the day of Judgment. Therefore I beſeech you hear me, as thoſe that would and may live with me to eternity. Mark your duty, I have ſpoken ſomething concerning the *Paſtors* duty in the morning; now for the *Peoples*: *It is the indiſpenſible duty of all ſincere Saints, to ſtand faſt, &c.* I confeſſe, I have a love for the whole Auditory, I have a Meſs for them; but my *Benjamin's* Meſs is for thoſe I once called my own people; you are my *Benjamins*, I wiſh I had a greater than a fifth for you. This Propoſition I ſhall

1. *Prove*, and then
2. *Improve*.

In the worſt of times, in the moſt ſhaking ſeaſons, and if I do not greatly miſtake, there is an hour of temptation threatned by God now beginning to be in-

inflicted; if ever you would ſtand, ſtand now; and for your comfort, let me but hint, that a Chriſtian may ſtand comfortably, when he falls ſadly; that is, he may ſtand comfortably when he falls by man. I knew that a great many years a go.

Firſt then, 'tis your duty to ſtand. There be Scriptures more then enough to prove this to be your duty, Col. 4. 12. *Stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God*, Phil. 1. 27. *Onely let your converſation be as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt, that whether I come and ſee you*, (alas poor *Paul!* thou come and ſee them! thou waſt beheaded before thou couldſt come & ſee them; but) *or elſe be abſent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye may ſtand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving together* (not to pluck out one anothers throats, no more of that; but ſtriving together, not againſt one another, but) *for the faith of the Goſpel.* So 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Therefore my Brethren, be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 'Tis your duty to ſtand. But

Secondly, *Wherein muſt we ſtand ſtedfaſt?* I have no new Doctrine to preach now, I ſhall but mind you of what I have formerly ſpoken when you could not believe. I confeſs I do not begin to be of a new judgment now; and ſhould I be continued in the Miniſtry, (a mercy I can hardly hope for) I ſhould be of the ſame judgment, & preach this doctrine, *Stand faſt.*

God wil certainly bring the people of God in *England* to his own terms, or elſe far them wel for ever. What's that we ſhould be ſtedfaſt in? I would adviſe to a ſtedfaſtneſs,

1. *Of*

1. *Of Judgement,*
2. To ſtedfaſtneſs of *Reſolution,*
3. To a ſtedfaſtneſs of *Faith*
4. To a ſtedfaſtneſs of *Conſcience.*

So ſtand faſt in the Lord in your *Judgement*, in your *Reſolution*, in your *Faith*, in your *Conſcience*.

1. J would adviſe to a *ſtedfaſtneſſe of Judgement*. Strange Doctrines are the greateſt fetters that do aſſault a ſound judgement; they are like waves, if they do *ſplit*, they will ſhake the Ship to purpoſe: therefore your way is, to caſt an hor wel, to ſtand firm on the rock of truth, J had almoſt ſaid all in a word, *Proteſtant truth*; though the market may riſe ſomewhat high, yet ſtand firmly there: while ſtrange Doctrines like ſo many impetuous Waves, are beating upon you, break themſelves in pieces they may, but if you ſtand, can never hurt you. J am not now to begin to warn you againſt *Popery*, not that J have the leaſt reflection on any thing in the world, but on the *Scriptures*, J am apt to think the *wound of the beaſt muſt be healed*; however, do not you *ſpread a plaiſter for the Beaſt* to heal his wound: *Be no more children toſſed to & fro, carried about with every wind of Doctrine*, with every wind, or windy Doctrine, *by the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs*, that can cog the Die, notable Gameſters there are in the World, but you muſt *ſtand* ſteady in judgement, you muſt be firm to your principles: J would have you *Stars*: not *Meteors*, for *Meteors* are carried about with every blaſt of Wind, J hope better things of you; J ſhall pray God would make you *ſtedfaſt in Judgment*: 1. Be ſure to get good principles; and ſecondly, Be ſure to ſtand in thoſe good prin-

principles that you have got. And though I cannot say but some *Tares* are sown among this Parish, yet I bless the Lord for the generality, I hope I may say, I have an *Orthodox Ministry*.

2. 'Tis not enough to stand in judgement, but we must be *stedfast* to our *Resolutions*; 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be stedfast, immovable*, such as stand firm on some Basis and foundation, that doth not totter and stagger: if they find you *staggering*, to be sure the next moment they look upon you as *falling*. Be as they say of one or both of the *Poles* of the Heavens, though all the world turns, the *Poles* are immovable. If I mistake not, you may see a great turn in the World; & behold at this day, the greatest turn that ever was in *England*; but yet you must not move, you must not stir, be true to your Resolutions, be just to your first love, go on in the Lords Work. let nothing take you off. If I have preached any false Doctrine among you, witnesse against me at the day of judgement; but if the things I have preached be true, stand to the truths, if you do not witness against my Doctrine (mine 'tis not) but rather witness for it, remember, if you leave it, that very Doctrine will witness against you at the day of Judgement. Oh! that excellent Heroe, *Queen Hester*, thus & thus I will do, *and if I perish, I perish*. You cannot imagine against how many thousand temptations a stedfast resolution will guard you.

3. There's a *stedfastness of Faith* too, when we so believe, as that we do not waver, or do not hesitate. Will you give me leave to propose to you (my dear Friends, though my Congregation I cannot call you) that question which our Saviour did unto the Jews,

(whom

(whom he hated, though I love you) *The Baptiſm of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?* The doctrines you have heard, have they been from Heaven or from men? Anſwer me, if from men abhor them man is a falſe creature, man would make merchandize of your faith and ſouls; but if from Heaven why then ſhould you not believe them? I bleſs the Lord, my conſcience bears me witneſſe, I never did ſo far propoſe a doctrine to you *I* would have you believe without Scripture. If the doctrines have been from God believe them, if not, abhor them, and any of thoſe that ſhall dare to bring a doctrine, but dare not bring the authority of the Scripture to warrant them. You may not be like thoſe in *Jam.* 1. 6. *that wavereth like a wave of the ſea driven with the wind and toſſed.* The moſt godly man may ſtumble in his way i.e. tread awry, but a wavering minded man is never ſetled concerning his way. Bleſſed be God I am not now (on this day that looks as like my dying day as can be in the world) to begin to fix upon a Religion, to fix upon my way, I know my way, if God wil but keep my ſteps, and guide me in that way. If God be God (I appeal to your conſciences) worſhip him; do not ſtand diſputing and doubting, do not, ſay ſhall I? ſhall I? if the ways you have found be the ways of God, follow them; God hath but one way to heaven, there is but one truth; if *Baal* be God follow *Baal*, do not ſtand wavering: do not conſult with fleſh and bloud; tis an infinite mercy that God will give any of us to leave Relations, Eſtates Congregations, any thing for Chriſt: ti's an infinite mercy we do not ſplit upon a rock. Be ſure to be either for God or *Baal*: a godly man many times halts in his way, but never halts between two opinions.

4. *Stedfastneſs* of *Conſcience*. Indeed the genius of my miniſtry hath lyen this way: and here I could eaſily launch out, but I muſt be ſhort, I would ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to thoſe that are weak, it becomes you to be ſtedfaſt in conſcience; then have a God decreeing, a Chriſt redeeming, a ſpirit quickning, a goſpel promiſing, a heaven prepared, a God infinitely more ready to ſave him, then he can poſſibly be deſirous to be ſaved by him. Be ſtedfaſt in conſcience againſt the guilt, the filth of ſin, againſt the temptations of Satan, *&c.* Let us draw neer, with full aſſurance of faith: you can never believe Gods love ſo much, as Gods love doth engage you to believe, *&c.* I might adde,

5. You muſt be ſtedfaſt in converſation: tis not the Running *well*, but the Running *out*; tis not the *fighting* but the *conquering* that gives you *title* to the *Reward*: for you to give a great deal of milk, and to throw it down all at length with your foot, may argue you to have a good dug, but a bad foot. Never give thoſe beaſts of *Babylon* occaſion to ſay, that a man may be a child of God in the morning, and a child of the devil at night; that we contradict that Doctrine by our converſation, that we aſſert in our profeſſion.

But why muſt we be ſtedfaſt?

Alas, why; would you have me marſhal up all the Reaſons; bid me count the ſtarres, or number the ſands on the ſea ſhore. There is not an attribute in God, not a precept, promiſe, or threatning in the word, not an ordinance, not a providence; there is nothing in God, or in the Devil, or in ſinners, or our ſelves, but all would give a coutribution of arguments to prove the Saints ſhould be ſtedfaſt, *I* muſt but hint at a few things. Firſt;

First; I would argue *from Jesus Christ.* Believers, you *love Christ*, and therefore you love the *honour* of *Christ*; now the honour of Christ is highly engag'd in your stedfastnesse. We never cast a deeper blot on the honour of Christ, then when we grow unstedfast: I need not tell you so, the Jesuits, those meek Papists will tell you so, those that delight in nothing more then in the milk of the Virgin *Mary*, and in the bloud of Saints: they have enough if you be unsteady. 1. You dishonour Christ in his *sufferings*: Pray tell me Believers, why did Christ sweat bloud? why did he dye? why did he undergoe what the wrath of Devils could inflict, but for this end, to make you steadie, to give you the conquest of all spirituall Enemies, and to make you stand in that conquest triumphing. Thus *I* remember as *Josuah*, Jos. 10.24. *Come, put your feet upon the necks of these kings, and they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.* So, Christ hath dy'd, that you might live, that you might stand; and what dishonour to the eternal Saviour of the world, to a *dying Saviour*, to see a *flying Christian.* 'Twas never heard of, that souldiers should flye before a conquered enemy, whose legs were cut off, whose armes were broken, whose sword taken from them. 2. Tis a dishonour to the *spirit of Christ*: The same spirit that was with Christ in all his Agonies, this very spirit he hath given to believers that he might bring them through with some victory; therefore, when we stand not, 'tis a high dishonour to Christ's spirit. 3. Tis a dishonour to *Christ's truth*: oh! let but a Saint fall, and what a dishonour doth it bring to the Truth. *I* have but thought of some late experiments of poor Ministers that I have

heard of, carried about in triumph, look here's the man, here's the man that hath done this, that, and t'other thing; and now look here's his--- I cannot excuse *Noah* from his *drunkenneſſe*, yet me thinks 'tis the part of a *Cham* to *ſhew his father's nakedneſſe*. *I* remember that one hath told me, ('tis a great Truth) That *Religion never ſuffers greater wounds, then by the hands of her profeſſed friends*; Oh! what advantage have the wicked *Papiſts* taken againſt us by the falls of Engliſh *Profeſſors*, both in principles & practice.

4. 'Tis a very great diſhonour to *Chriſt's all ſufficiency*. Tell me man, is thy Chriſt able to protect the againſt all evil? and is he able to ſupply thee with all good? or is he not? if he be not, then deny him, and whatever thou haſt ſaid concening him; if he be, then ſtaud cloſe to him, *in the mount he will he ſeen.*

2*ly*. *I* would argue from *Saints*, the infinite advantage that at a long run [*I* do not ſay preſently) wil redound to thoſe that are ſteadie in judgement, in reſolution, in faith, in conſcience, in practice, ſo far as all theſe are conformable to the word of God, & no further. The greateſt advantage appears upon theſe four grounds.

1. Whatever thou thinkeſt, a ſteadie condition is the ſafeſt condition.
2. The fulleſt condition.
3. The ſtrongeſt condition.
4. The freeſt condition.

Oh! that *I* could beat this into my heart, as well as 'tis in my head. The *ſafeſt* condition in the midſt of *dangers*; the *fulleſt* condition in the midſt of *wants*; the *ſtrongeſt* condition in the midſt of *aſſaults*, & the

freeſt

freeſt condition in the midſt of *ſtraights. I profeſſe in* the preſence of God, I have felt theſe things, and knew them to be true many yeares ago.

1. It is the *ſafeſt* condition: never do the Saints take hurt, but by declining, moving from their center: while at their center the *Devil* cannot touch them; *de*parting thence, is like the poor Bird from her neſt, every one hath a fling at them. Remember this, let but a man once leave his Scriptural ſtation, and what temptation is he able to ſtand againſt: 't is juſt like a man thrown down from the top of an houſe, no ſtopping till he come to the bottom. 1. Joh. 5. 18. *He that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.*

2. It is the *fulleſt* condition. Oh! my Brethren, Saints living ſtedfaſtly on their foundation, are continually ſupplied by God, as the fountain doth continually iſſue out it ſelf into the ſtreams. *I* know 'tis beſt living upon a ſingle God, How many thouſands be there yet living in *England*, that can tell you, they never enjoyed *more of God*, then when they enjoyed *leaſt of the Creature.* Some have profeſſed to me, their *priſon* was to them as a *palace*, that were troubled more with theſe things then ever you were, and the God of heaven grant you never may.

3. 'Tis the *ſtongeſt* condition. A man that ſtands ſtedfaſt, is like a man on a Rock, the waters come, they may daſh themſelves in pieces, but never ſhall be able to daſh him in pieces, he is fixed on a Rock, and therefore ſtands. A man that ſtands ſteady to his Scripturall principles, is like *Sampſon* with his *Locks* about him, let all the *Philiſtines* come, what cares he, he is able to conquer them all.

4. 'Tis the *freeſt* condition. A man that deſerts his principles, is a ſlave to every condition, afraid of every humour, of every Aſpine leaf in the world, thinks all thoſe are *informers* that converſ with him, is afraid of ſome *promooter* or other. But he that ſtands faſt, where the ſpirit of God is, there is liberty and freedome: ſuch a man in chains, as *Paul* at *Rome*, is in a far freer condition then others not in that reſtraint. Well then, 'tis rationall that you ſtand, but it may be your luſt and intereſt can hardly ſwallow theſe things: if we ſtand we ſhall not fall; nay, if you doe not ſtand, be ſure you ſhall fall at laſt. The next thing I would do, is to apply this truth.

Is it the moſt important duty of all ſincere profeſſors, in the moſt ſhaking ſeaſons, to ſtand ſtedfaſt in the Lord? then

Firſt, by way of *Lamentation*, and that

1. *Over our own ſouls.*
2. *Over hundreds of Congregations.*

Lord, muſt, doe we ſay hundreds, nay thouſands of Congregations, that are this day, though they do not accompany us in perſon, yet mingling teares with us, and eſpecially as I hear, on the *Weſt* of *England*.

1. *Over our own hearts.* We muſt ſtand; that's our duty: oh! how ſhould it cauſe us to lie low, by reaſon of the inſtability of our hearts, and their curſ d declining from the true foundation every day. Alas Beloved, this is that that God complains of, *they are a generation whoſe ſpirit is not ſtedfaſt with God*; and therefore we have very much reaſon to complain of it: oh! that this ſin might be forgiven: oh, what an unſettled people have we been! to day we have been

been apt to cry *Hosanna, Hosanna to the Son of David*; to morrow our note is changed, *crucifie him, crucifie him, give us Barabbas*: to day the *Lord is God*, to morrow *Baal*; any thing is *God*, provided we may keep our Estates. Oh Lord! what wilt thou doe with such a people as this? certainly it is a lamentation, and ought to be a lamentation. Believe it Beloved, I can now count seven years, if not something more, wherein I have most clearly expected the dayes I now see; no way, but the severest wayes to be taken with such a false people as we have been. Judge in your own thoughts, whether we have been true to God or Man, to Saints or Sinners, to the Churches of God at home, or abroad: whether or no this be not matter of lamentation.

2. With respect to our *Congregations*. ('tis not against the Law yet to call them *our* Congregations) This I confesse, I can rather weep then speak to, I cannot speak, my heart is too big for my head here. Lord, is it the duty of people, of Saints, to stand, to be stedfast? how then should we mourn over those poor souls, that because their *pillers* are taken away, must needs for ought we know *fall*, unlesse thou dost support them? What, Lord, dost thou complain of a flock of sheep that are scattered? oh! ther'es no wonder in it, their Shepheard is gone. Doe you look on it as a strange thing, to see a poor Ship to be tossed here and there in the Sea, when their Pilot is destroyed? why Mother, is it a strange thing for your Children to fall and knock their Armes, Legs, their brains out? why their Mother is taken from them oh poor people! good God provide for this Congregation, I, and for this City, that (let defacing,

abominable wretches say what they will) is certainly one of the best Cities God hath in the world;& therefore they hate it so desperately because God loves it, and because they hate that God that loves it. I blesse God, I can speak of my own people, they are not a mad pestiferous people, for the most of them. How many thousand have their hearts at their mouths now at this time before God in *England*: alas,alas,that we should ever have our Seers carried away from us: but what think you, when poor people shall be exposed to greater temptations, to an Ulcer in the very Kidneys, to a Plague in the very Heart,or Head:you now fear it, but when you feel it, what then?

2. By way of Exhortation: Beloved, I remember good *Jacob*, when he was come into *Egypt*, and ready to die,calls his children together, and before he dies *blesseth* his *children*. I cannot say you are my *children*, but I can truly say in the strength of God, You are dearer to me then the children of my own bowels I remember what poor *Esau* said, *Hast thou but one blessing, my Father? Bless me, even me also, oh my Father.* Oh! beloved, I have a few *blessings* for you, I have a few words of *Exhortation* for you: and for God's sake take them as if they dropt from my lips when dying; 'tis very probable we shall never meet more while the day of Judgment, what ever others think, I am utterly against all irregular ways: I have (I bless the Lord) never had a hand in any change of Government in all my life: *I* am for prayers, tears, quietness, submission, and meekness, and let God do his work, and that will be best done when he doth it.

There-

Therefore be exhorted to ſtand faſt in the Lord: My own people, hear me now, though you ſhould never hear me more; be exhorted to ſtand faſt in the Lord; you are not a Schiſmatical, Heretical people, I do not know the leaſt perſon among you enclining to *Popery*: Therefore be exhorted as ye have been a people that have waited upon the Ordinances of God, that have not perſecuted your poor Miniſter: that have made it your deſign and buſineſs to live lovingly, quietly and as it become Chriſtians, (I am confident a Miniſter may live as comfortably among you, as among any people in *England*.) So be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the Work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor ſhal not be in vain in the Lord. Here I had prepared, J confeſs, ſeveral arguments to have moved you to this ſtedfaſtneſs.

1. *I* could have told you, that with drawing of any one of you back, you wil meet with great temptations which will very much unfit you for Heaven. *If any man* or woman *draw back*, *my ſoul* (ſaith God) *ſhall have no pleaſure in him*: J could have urged you with examples from the Heathens; *Alexander* being in *India* bid them tell him the greateſt rarity in their Country: Sir, go tell them, ſay they, when you come to *Greece*, there are many here that cannot be forced by the proweſs of *Alexander*, to change their minds: J know there are ſome here, that cannot be eaſily perſwaded to change their Religion. Saith *Lactantius*, *our very women torment their tormentors*. J would never deſire a more able diſputant, than a woman againſt a Monk.

2. J could tel you of thoſe enjoyments God hath put on

on you, our miseries have been great, but our mercies have been greater: I could tel you of six troubls, and of seven; of six wherein God hath stood by, and of seven wherein he hath not forsaken: & the truth is, he cannot forsake his people, he may forsake them as for *comfort*, he wil never forsake them as for *support*: let him lay on a burden, he will be sure to strengthen the back.

3. I hope 'tis not dangerous if I tel you, you are ingaged to God: there are *vows* upon you, Baptismal vows, to say no more, you have sworn to God, you have lifted up your hands: you are those that have undertaken that you would be true to God to your lives end: if these vows have been any way strengthened, Oh! remember *Zedekiah*'s case, *Ez.* 17.18,19. *Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant (when lo he had given his hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape: therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head.* Remember it, you may play fast and loose with man, you must not think ever to carry it away by playing fast and loose with God.

4. If you should not stand, you loose all you have wrought: all your prayers, tears, professions practises, sufferings are all gone if you give out at last, &c.

5. While you stand by God, God hath promised *to stand with you*: and the truth is, if I have but one God, tis no great matter for all the tyles in *worms*. There be a 1000 devils, but all those devils are in one chain, & the end of that chain is in the hand of one

one God: oh! God will ſhew himſelf ſtrong. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.*

Queſt. *But what ſhall I do to ſtand?*

Anſ. 1. If ever you would ſtand, if ever you would be firm ſtanding Chriſtians indeed, take heed you be not *light and proud Chriſtians*: a feather will never ſtand againſt a whirlwind, Errour and Prophaneneſſe are moſt apt to breed in proud hearts. The *Proud* and *Blaſphemers* are put together, (2 *Tim.* 3. 2.) Be but *humble* Chriſtians, that's the way to be ſtanding ſteady Chriſtians: if ever you would be ſteady in your ſtations, you muſt be low in your own eyes: do not you go & judg. And now, we ſhall have another kind of Religion come up, as we have had it a great while; ſuch a man cannot be an honeſt man, alas, he is a Presbyterian, he's an Independant, he's an Anabaptiſt, &c. Now, all our great buſineſs will be, ſuch a man cannot be a good, an honeſt man, for he doth not conform; on the other ſide, he cannot be an honeſt man, for *he* doth *conform*: Theſe are poor things: I bleſs God, I lay not the ſtreſs of my Salvation upon theſe: tis true, I cannot in conſcience conform, but I do not lay the ſtreſſe of ſalvation on it, as I did not lay the ſtreſs of my ſalvation on my being a *Presbyterian*; I confeſs I am ſo, and have been; it hath been my unhappineſſe to be alwayes on the ſinking ſide, yet I lay not the ſtreſs of my ſalvation upon it. 'Tis my conſcience, but it may be I have not ſo much light as another man, and I profeſs in the preſence of God, could

could I *conform* without ſin to my own conſcience, I would; if I ſhould do any thing againſt my conſcience, I ſhould ſin, and break my peace, and conſcience, and all, and never ſee good day: do not then ſpend the ſtrength of your zeal for your religion in cenſuring others. That man that is moſt buſie in cenſuring others, is always leaſt employed in examining himſelf. Remember good *John Bradford*, he would not cenſure *Bonner* nor *Gardiner*, but ſaith he, they called *J. Bradford*, the *hypocritical J. Bradford*, &c. I do not ſpeak this, as though I can, or did in conſcienc approve of thoſe things for which I muſt ſuffer, that I cannot approve of them, but to take off people from thoſe things that are ſo far from the foundation. Look you but to the main things, and look but into your own hearts, examin them, & then you need not be much perſwaded to look about to others.

2. You muſt take heed you be not *looſe Chriſtians*: will you remember one thing from me (the God of Heaven grant you never liv to ſee it verified) *A looſe Proteſtant*, is one of the fitteſt perſons in the world to make a *ſtrict Papiſt*. Tell not me of his Proteſtantiſm, being a Drunkard, 'tis becauſe his King, or Countrey are Proteſtants where they live. There's no Religion in a looſe liver, if ungodlineſs be in the heart, 'tis no difficult thing for error to get into the head. A looſe heart can beſt comply with looſ principles, ſee, if they will not be of any Religion in the world, that's uppermoſt; let the *Turks* prevail, they would ſoon be of his Religion.

3. Take heed of being *worldly chriſtians*: oh! this is the *David* that hath ſlain his 10 thouſands. A world-

ly

ly heart will be bought and sold upon every turn to serve the Devils turn. Come to a worldly heart, and but promise him *thirty pieces of silver* he will *betray* his *Saviour*. The temptations of the world are great upon us at this time, you that are husbands and parents know it; the world is a great temptation, but if we be overcome by the world, and the world not overcome by us, we shall never be able to overcome any one temptation that is offered to us. Therefore that's an admirabl support. *In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*: I have overcome the world *for you*, and likewise I have overcome the world *in you*. Oh Lord, if thou wilt but overcome the love and the fear of the world, if thou wilt but arm as against the smiles of world, then come what will, we shall stand stedfast.

4. Take heed you be not *hypocritical christians*: *i.e.* take heed you do not receive the truth, and onely receiv the truth, & not receiv the truth in the love of that truth, 2 *Thes.* 2.10. You have received the truth, but have you received the truth in the love of that truth which you have received; want of this, is that damnable occasion to *Popery*; *And with all deceivablenesse of unrighteousnesse in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; & for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth.* 'Tis just with God they should fall into *errours*, whose hearts did never love real *truths*. Better never receive the truth, then to receive it, & not in the love of it.

Take heed of being *venturous*, *and God tempting Christians*

Christians: what's that? when do I tempt God? I tempt God when I doe run into a Pest-house, and say, God will preserve me from the plague. Take heed of running upon temptations to sin, whether it be in *principles* or in *practice*, I could tell you of two *spiritual Pest-houses* in England if I had time, for *principles* one, *and for practises* another; I doe not say that I mean *Play-houses* on the one hand, or *Mass-houses* on the other hand. Certainly Brethren, I read of *Julian*, that wicked bloody *Apostate*, that he sunk into that his Apostacy first, by going to hear *Libanius* preach, mistake me not, I am not against your hearing the *Ministers of Christ*, for a man may be a *true Minister*, though he be a *bad man*; all the world can never answer the the instance of *Judas*, who was a true Minister, though a bad man; while I plead for the *truth of his Ministry*, *I* doe not spread a skirt over the *wickednesse of his life*. The *Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Chair, hear them*. But that which *I* mainly aim at, is this, do not you go, and run, and venture your selves upon temptations; you have heard of *superstitious* or *Idolatrous* worship, you have a months mind to see this, and what if so be when you are found in Satans way, Satan should lay his paw on you, and claim to you, what doe you there in *Satan's* ground. Would you be found when you come to die in a *Play-house*, or in such a place where the true God is *Idolatrously worshipped*? 'Tis a great truth, if you would not be found in the Devil's power, doe not be found in the Devil's pound. Brethren, we must know, Satan is busie enough to tempt us, we need not go to tempt him; *Eve* lost all that she had by hearing one Sermon, but

'twas

'twas from the Devil. Therefore, if you would not have your Pockets pickt, do not trade amongst Cheaters: 1. *Tim.* 6. 3. 5. *If any man teach otherwise*, &c. (then that ye have received, and we preached) *from such withdraw thy self*; that's a good, honest, laudable separation, *from such withdraw thy self.*

6. *Where God doth not find a mouth to speak, doe not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe.* [pray mind it, this I am sure is of concernment] This is one of the grand points in my Card or Compass, on which I hope I shall venture all. If any man come with a Doctrine not *according to the word of God*, let him carry it whither he will, what have I to doe with it? Either you come from God, or no, If you do, shew me his word, and I'le believe it; if not, open your pack where you please, *&c.* where God doth not find a mouth to speak, where you have not a precept, promise, threatning or example in the word of God, let them talk their hearts out, 'tis nothing to me, to my Religion, to my salvation.

Object. But what ground have you for this?

Ans. Jesuit, I will tell you my ground: this is my great hold I have against *Popery*. Could they convince me of this, *that I must believe with an implicite faith, because they say it*, I think it would not be long before I turn'd *Papist*.

Quest. But why must I not believe it with an implicite faith.

Ans. Look you into those three great Scriptures, *Mat.* 15. 2. *Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the Elders?* The Jewes come and tell Christ he was not a true Son of the Church of the Jewes, he

was

was disobedient to the Church of the Jewes; why? thou hast Disciples that walk not as they ought; what do they do? they commit an unpardonable sin, *They transgress the Traditons of the Elders*, they break one of the greatest Commandements. What's that tradition? *They wash not their hands when they eat bread*: This was the great sin, and they charge it on him, eat with unwashen hands: why, why bring you in this tradition? what have you to say for it? what's that to the purpose? prove *Jesus Christ* that there is any thing in the Word of God that is *against* washing? But, prove you out of the Word of God where they are *bound* to wash before they eat? If you will give out your imposition, make out your institution; and let me tell you, you talk of tradition, but first you set up an Altar God never thought of; and secondly, you pull down Gods Altar: *Why do you also transgress the Commandement of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and Mother; and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him dye the death: But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his Father and Mother, hee shall be free; thus have yee made the commandment of God of none effect by your Traditions: Ye Hypocrites*, you are told of it long ago; *well did Esaias propheſie of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth mee with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* They draw near, wash their hands, wash their cups, and have filthy souls! *They honour me with their lips*, &c. But though their *principle*, their *heart* is bad, their *worship* is good, is it not? No, *In vain*

they

hey do worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the command-ments of men. So then, my Brethren, remember, *all thoſe that teach for doctrines the precepts of men, in vain do they worſhip God*; Here's an innocent command, not againſt the Word of God, but this command, *You muſt waſh before you eat*; if you do *not waſh*, you do *tranſgreſs the traditions of the Elders*; but let you ſtarve Father and Mother, if you *give* but to the *Church*, to a *Nunnery*, *Friery*, *&c.* 'tis all one; ſo that all thoſe that will for doctrines teach the traditions of men, will render the commandments of God of none effect; *in vain do they worſhip me.* Look therefore, wherever God doth not find a tongue to ſpeak, do not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe. Chriſtians, if you expect *Chriſts benediction*, always call aloud for *Chriſts Inſtitution*, ſo Col. 2. 18, 19. one of the greateſt ſteps you have againſt *Popery*, *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worſhipping of Angels, intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen, vainly puft up by his fleſhly mind, &c.* Deut 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it, thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* There are no Wens in the body of God's Precepts, therefore none of them to be cut off. You muſt not deal with God's Ordinances, as that Tyrant *Procruſtes* did with men, if they were too long for his Bed, he would cut them ſhorter; if too ſhort, he would pull their limbs out of joint to make them longer. Never think your ſelves in Conſcience bound to lend an ear to that which God doth not find a mouth to ſpeak.

7. Would you ſtand faſt, *beware of ſhaking do-*

ctrines; what are those? there are a great many of such doctrines that are shaking; give me leave to instance in three or four.

1. As you love your souls, *beware of all doctrines that tend to, and preach up licentiousnesse, loosnesse and prophaneneſſe*. Should any tell you, you may lawfully violate & prophane the *Sabbath*, do not believe it; the doctrine of the Gospel is a doctrine of godliness; *it teaches us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*; therefore if you find any doctrine at any time that should have the least tendency to *incourage* you in any sin, know, 'tis a doctrine *against* the Gospel.

2. Where-ever you find *any doctrine that shall tend to the lifting up of man's free-will, and debasing of Gods free-grace*; know, 'tis a wicked doctrine, and against the genius of the Gospel. Perhaps the *Papists* will tell you, *we are alive*; *Paul* tells you, *we are dead*. They say that we *can do* any thing; many things that we talk to the World we cannot do; they say, that we can save our selves, and close with Christ if we will; whereas the Apostle tells you, 1 *Cor.* 1. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishneſs unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* It may be they will tell you, a natural man *may* love God with his heart, really as so, & savingly; whereas the *Apostle* tell you, Rom 8 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can he.* Remember it, in all those *Doctrines* wherein we do agree with those whom we call *Pelagians*, and their brood the *Arminians*, so far we

we agree with the *Jesuits*, and the worst of *Papists*.

3. As you would avoid Hell, *avoid all those Doctrines that would lift up self-righteousness, and debase the righteousness of Christ*: I fear I shall never be in that capacity that I would, to stand you in stead in this particular. I confess I am against forty things in *Popery*, but my whole soul is here engaged: if that doctrine be a truth, I never expect salvation by God; either I must be saved by Christ alone, or else I must not be saved by Christ at all; though Christ will never save me without sanctification, yet Christ never intended my sanctification should merit his salvation: Be as holy as you can, as if there were no Gospel to save; yet when you are as holy as you can, you must believe in Christ, as if there were no Law at all to condemn you. Come and tell me of the merit of Saints, *&c.* I wil believe that truth, when I believe the *Whore* of *Babylon* to be *Christs Spouse*. See *Phil.* 3. 9 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.

8. Would you stand? *you must be praying Christians*: I confess when most of my strings are broken, there is yet one holds; there is a spirit of prayer (remember *Atheist*) among the Saints of God; I can pray yet; & I had rather stand against the Canons of the wicked, than against the prayers of the righteous. Oh! *pray that you enter not into temptation*; or, if we enter into temptation, Lord, let not the temptation enter into us; Pray, *if possible, let this Cup passe from me*; but if not, let it not poyson me, but let me be bettered by it, and in due time deliver me from it. I believe it would be a great temptation to you, if it should be said to you, you shall trade with no man any more, *&c.* you

not go & tell the *Jesuits* we are *Schismaticks*, for we are none; but this I would advise (I speak as though I were dying) do whatsoever lies in your power, to hear such whom you think to be godly; beg of *God*, be earnest with him, that he would give Pastors after his own heart, and whom God hath sent; not such as may daub with untemper'd morter and not such as may prophesie lies in the Name of the Lord; not such as may be clouds without water, but such as may be guides of the blind, burning and shining lights, faithful Stewards. What shall you do! what did you do twenty or thirty years ago? What did the good old *Puritans* do? they were not *Schismaticks*. But as much as lies in you possible, hear them whom in your Conscience you judge God doth hear: Oh! then expect the Word of God should come to your hearts, when you have ground to believe that it comes from your Pastors heart: I must confess I intend to do the same, when put into the same condition with you. I acknowledge I am bound in conscience to hear the Word of God; but I must take care whom I hear, hear those by whom God speaks; I hope God will grant several such.

Take but this advice more, and I have no more to say, *Whatever abuse you find either in Pastor or People, or wherever you find it, do not you go, as your old use hath been, to rail, calumniate, back-bite, and speak behind their backs*; this is wicked & ungodly, but do everyone according as God prescribes us that are *members* of any visible Church; what's that? if I know any thing against my brother, do not go & make a sputter & noise, and back-bite, but take the rule of Christ, *If thy brother shall trespasse against thee, go*

and

and tell him of his fault between him and thee alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; and if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, and leave the blood at their door, thou haſt freed thine own ſoul. I hope by God's Grace I ſhall do ſo.

Thus I have ſpoken ſomthing from this Scripture: I cannot ſpeak what I deſire; for beſides the exhauſting of my ſpirits, there is ſomething to be done after, *viz.* a Funeral-Sermon. I ſhall ſay no more, but onely this, The God of Heaven be pleaſed to make you mind theſe plain things; I can truly ſay this, I have not ſpoken one word (that I remember) which I would nōt have ſaid to you if I had been juſt a dying, and been going to God as ſoon as gone out of the Pulpit; *and the God of peace be with you*; onely mind that one thing, When God doth not find a tongue to ſpeak, do not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe.

FINIS.

SERMON XIII.

HEB. 12. Ver. 1. *Mr Manton:*

Wherefore ſeeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and let run with patience the Race that is ſet before us.

IN the former Chapter you have a Spiritual Chronicle, or a Catalogue of the Lord's Worthies, and all the eminent effects of their Faith; and now the Apoſtle comes to make uſe of this Hiſtory that he had produced through ſo many ſucceſſions of Ages, of all the holy men of God that excelled in Faith: *Wherefore ſeeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes, &c.*

The Text is wholly *Hortatory*. In it observe:

1. The *premisses* or principle the Apostle worketh upon, *seeing we are compassed, &c.*

2. The practical Inferences which are deduced from thence, and they are two.

1. One concerning the privative part of our duty, *Let us lay aside every weight, &c.* There is something external and without, like to clog us in our way to Heaven---*every weight*; and something within that wil hinder and trouble us within; therefore he saith, *and the sin which doth so easily beset us.*

2. Here is the positive part, *Let us run with patience the Race that is set before us.* There's motion [*Run*] the manner [*with patience*] the stage or way [*the Race that is set before us.*]

My purpose is to give you some brief thoughts upon this useful and practical inference of the Apostle, from the Histories of the faithful before recorded. Therefore I will sum up the whole Text in this point.

Doct. *The people of God that have such a multitude of examples of holy men and women set before them, should prepare themselves to run the spiritual race with more patience and chearfulness.*

There are two things in this Doctrine; the *Encouragement* and the *Duty*. I shall open both with respect to the circumstances of the Text.

First, the Encouragement, *A multitude of examples*, or as in the Text, *Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*: Mark, here are *witnesses, a great cloud of witnesses*, and these *compassing us round about.*

First,

First, here are *witneſſes*; by that term we are to underſtand thoſe worthy Saints mentioned and reckoned up in the former Chapter, *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moſes*, &c. all the Saints of God that have had experience of the goodneſs of his providence to them, and the fulfilling of his promiſes; they are all called *Witneſſes*; Why? becauſe they depoſe a Teſtimony for God, and ſpeak to future generations to be conſtant, as they did, that they might receive the like reward. This *witneſs* was partly in their *faith*, and partly in the *fruit* of their *faith*.

1. They witneſſed by their Faith (*John* 3.33.) *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true*. A man that hath ſoundly digeſted the promiſes, that expreſſes his faith by chearfulneſs and patience under all difficulties, troubles, delays, and thoſe ſundry trials that he meets with, he gives it under hand and ſeal, proclaims it to the world that he hath to do with the true God. And

2. They witneſſed in the fruits of their faith, as they give us an inſtance of Gods fidelity towards them that faithfully adhere to, and firmly believe in his promiſes; ſo it is ſaid (Heb. 6,12.) *Be not ſloathful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promiſe*: Let *faith* but ſet *patience* a work, do but hold out a little while with God, and you may learn by the example of all thoſe holy men we ſhall inherit the promiſes; they ſhall be made good to a tittle, and not one thing fail of all that the Lord hath ſpoken; as theſe holy men were ex-

erciſed and toſſed to and fro, but it ſucceeded well with them at the laſt. Oh! then let us hearken to the depoſition of theſe worthy witneſſes that are recorded in the Scripture, and with ſuch an invincible reſolution as theirs was, let us hold on our courſe towards true happineſs: If we do not, they that are now propounded as witneſſes to us, will at the day of judgement be produced as witneſſes againſt us. And pray alſo let us remember that we are to continue and keep afoot that Teſtimony to ſucceeding generations; for not only the Prophets and holy men of God, were Gods witneſſes, but all Gods peopl alſo are his witneſſes; (*Iſ.*43,10.) by their faith, patience, diligence, conſtancy, and a chearfulneſs under afflictions, they are to give it under hand and ſeal to the world, that God is a true and faithful God. But now, if we either by our ſinfull walking, or by our drooping diſcouragements, diſcredit Chriſt and his profeſſion, then we are witneſſes againſt him; we deny that Religion which we would ſeem to profeſs; and cry up (*Tit.* 1. 16.) *They profeſs they know God, but in works they deny him*: & the more dangerous, becauſe *deeds* are more deliberate then *words*, and ſo a greater evidence of what we think in our hearts. If we by drooping diſcouragements, and ſinful walking diſcredit Religion, we deny it, and do in effect put the lie upon Chriſt. Therefore let us remember they were witneſſes, and ſo muſt we.

2*ly*. By a figurative ſpeech they are called a *cloud*, [having a cloud of witneſſes] why ſo? I might

nigh trouble you with many conceits Interpreters have had of this word *cloud*; say some, because of the raisedness of their spirits, because clouds fly aloft: *Clouds* for the fruitfulness of their doctrine, as clouds send down fruitfull showers upon the earth; and *clouds*, because they cool and cover us from the heat; so some would gloss for our comfort: others with more Judgement say, a *cloud* with allusion to the *pillar of cloud* which conducted the Israelites to *Canaan*; yet neither doth this come up fully to the scope of the Apostle; for the Apostle speaks not of a cloud that goes before us, but of a *cloud that compasses us round about*, and therfore a *cloudy*; the reason why 'tis called so, is the number & multitude of those witnesses, as a cloud is made up of a multitude of vapors gathered together, & condensed into one body; and so the expression is often used (*Ezek.* 38.9.) *thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land*, &c. noting the increase of the people when God would restore them, the multitude of converts: and so in profane Authors, *Livie* hath such an expression, an army of men is called a cloud: but this is enough to shew the intent of this expression, that there are a multitude, a very great number: though the godly comparatively, and with respect to the wicked are a few, yet considered in themselves they are a great number; for if the *Martyrs*, and those glorious instances of heroick faith, and that under the Old Testament, when God's interest was more confin'd to one people, if there were such a Church then, of so great a number; what

will the whole Church of the old and new Testament be when we shall meet together in Heaven? We are often discouraged with the paucity of Professors, & are apt to think our selves to be *left alone*, 1 King. 19.10. But let us remember there is a *Cloud of Witnesses*; we are not solitary now, & certainly we shall not want company when we Come to Heaven, *To the innumerable company of, &c.*

Again, it meets with an ordinary and strong temptation which Satan suggests to the hearts of the godly, that they are *singular*, & matchless in *their afflictions*, that none of the people of God have ever undergone such difficulties as they are expos'd unto; & this makes them question their Father's affections, & put themselves out of the number of his children. But all these things are accomplished in the Saints of God before you; here is a *Cloud of Witnesses* that have been exercised & tried to purpose, (1 *Pet.* 5.9.) They are troubled with a busie Devil, a naughty World, a corrupt heart, all have had their trial from God's correcting hand; *The same afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren that are in the world.* So that we have many *fellows*; our lot is no harder then the Saints of God that have gone before us, for there is a *Cloud of Witnesses.*

3*dly*, Observe The Apostle calls it a *Cloud*; compasses us round about; *i.e.* We have instances for every trial, Temptation, duty that we are put upon: *Here* we have examples of those that have fulfilled the *Comands* of Christ on this side with an undaunted courage; & the examples of those

that

that have born the *Croſs* of *Chriſt* with an invincible patience: Here we have examples of thoſe that have conquered *right-hand Temptations*, that have deſpiſed the delights of the World; & there of thoſe that have conquered *left hand Temptations*, that have not been broken & affrighted with the terrors of the World; all the Saints of God have trodden that way; the ſame paths wherein we are to walk after them; we cannot look this way or that way; but we have inſtances of Faith, confidence in God, & patience; *We are compaſſed about &c.* In ſhort, here lyes the encouragement that Chriſtians ſhould propound to themſelves:

1. *That there are examples*; Chriſtians of later times have more to anſwer for their *Infidelity*, than thoſe of former ages; they that firſt believed the promiſes, believed without ſuch a *cloud of witneſſes*, or multitude of examples; many have gone before us that have broken the Ice, & that found good ſucceſs from their own experience; they have *commended God to us as a true and faithful God*, & wil not you go on? When *Jonathan* & his Armor-bearer climbed up the Rocks of the *Philiſtins*, then the people were encouraged to go up after; So here are ſome that are gone before you, and it hath ſucceeded well with them.

2. *Theſe examples are many*; not one or two that might be ſuppoſed to be ſingulary aſſiſted, & to have eminent Prerogatives above the reſt of their Brethren, but many in every age, *a whole cloud of them.*

3. *There are examples of many rare and excellent men*, the beſt that ever lived under Heaven. *Take*

(*my Brethren*) the *Prophets for an example, &c.* Jam. 5.10.

4. They are propounded to us, not for their words onely, and for their profession, but for their *deeds*, for their bitter sufferings; and they abundantly manifest to us, that there is nothing *impossible* in our duty, or any thing so difficult but may be overcome through Christ's strength enabling us: They all had the same nature we have; they were of the like pasions with us, flesh and blood as we are, of the same relations and concernments; and then on the other side, we have the same *Cause* with them, the same recompence of reward to encourage us, the same God and Saviour to recompence us; he suffered for *us* as well as for *them*; therefore we should follow in their steps, and hold fast our confidence to the end; for they have shewed us, that poverty, reproaches, death it self, and all those things that would look harsh, and with a gastly aspect upon the eyes of the *World*, are no such evils but that a Believer may rejoice in them, and triumph over them. I say, they have shew'd the blandishments of the World have not such a charm, but they may be renounced without any loss of considerable joy and contentment; and that the duties of Christianity are not so hard, but that a little waiting upon God will bring in Grace enough to perform them: Therefore saith the Apostle, *Seeing we have a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside, &c.* And so I come to the *encouragement*, to the

Second thing, and that is the duty here pressed, 1. Here is the privative, 2. The positive part of our

our duty: Here is *mortification* and *vivification*; *Mortification*, *Let us lay aside*, &c. *Vivification*, *Let us run with patience*, &c. In both the branches he alludes to terms proper to *Races*: In a *Race* you know men strip themselves of their Cloaths, and whatever is burdensome and heavy, that they may be the more light of foot; and so the Apostle bids us *lay aside every weight*; and they did withall *diet* themselves, that they might have no clog from within, 1 *Cor.* 9.25. *Every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things, &c.* They took care that they did not clog & indispose themselves for the race they were to run; but they verily run onely for a corruptible Crown; we for a Crown that is incorruptible and glorious; so according to this double practice of Racers, we are to cast aside every weight from without, *&c.* So here's a double object, laying aside every weight, and of sinne: There's *onus externum*, the *weight without*, that presseth us down, and hinders our speed; and then there's *impedimentum internum*, there's sin, that which weakens within: By reason of the former, we make little speed; by reason of the latter we are often interrupted, and therefore we must do as they, that they might be swift and expedite, *lay aside every weight*, and be more *temperate in all things*. Herein a Runner in a Race differs from a Traveller; a Traveller strengthens himself for his Journey as wel as he can, his clothes on, sometimes carries a great burden with him; but a Runner of a Race makes himself as light as he can. But to come more particularly to the words:

First,

First, *Lay aside every weight*: By *weight* is meant those thing gs that burden the soul, and make our Heavenly Progress more tedious & cumbersom; and by *weight* is meant (I think) the *delights* and *cares* of the world, the multitude of secular business, all our earthly contentments and affairs, so far as they are a burden to us, hinder us in our way to Heaven, these must all be put off, *Luk.* 21. 3,4. saith Christ, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, &c.* The heart that is depress, cannot be so free for God, and the Offices of onr Heavenly Calling, when we give way to *surfeiting, drunkenness, cares of this World.*

1. The heart may be overcharged with the delights of the World; *Surfeiting* and *Drunkenness* must not be taken in the gross notion; you must not think of spewing, reeling, vomiting, as if to avoid these were a ful compliance with Christs direction; the *heart* may be *overcharged* when the *stomach* is not; there is a *dry drunkenness*, & a *more refined surfeiting*, & that is when the *heart* grows heavy, unfit for *prayer*, relishes not the things of the *spirit*; when the *delights* of the flesh clog the wheel, abate that vigor and chearfulness that we should shew forth in the Worship of God, and holy actions, when the delights of the flesh withdraw us from that watchfulness & diligence that is necessary in taking care for our souls, then the heart is overcharged: Voluptuous living is a great sin, it chokes the seeds of *piety* so soon as planted in the heart, so that they can bring nothing to perfection; it brings a brawn & a deadness upon the Conscience,

ſcience & affections; there is nothing that hardens the heart ſo much, as the ſoftneſs of carnal pleaſure, *Jud.* 19. *ſenſual, having not the Spirit: Senſuality* quenches our natural bravery & briskneſs of ſpirit that becoms a man; much more doth it hinder the ſublime operations of the Spirit of God. Wel then, remember Chriſtians, you are not only *Travellers* by the way, but *Runners* in a *Race*: If we were to ſpeak to you only under the notion of Travellers in a way, this were enough to wean you from the delights of the fleſh, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *As ſtrangers and Pilgrims abſtain from fleſhly luſts which war againſt the ſoul.* The more you indulge theſe fleſhly luſts, the more you hearten & ſtrengthen the great enemy of your ſouls, and ſtarve the *better part*; but you are as *Runners* in a *Race*; by this Metaphor the duty is more bound upon you, much more ſhould you beat down the body, & keep it in ſubjection; the Apoſtle hath a notable word 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it in ſubjection, &c.* I beat down my body; you muſt either keep under pleaſures, or Pleaſures will keep you under; for a man is ſoon brought under the power dominion and tyrannie of evil cuſtoms, & ſome brutiſh pleaſure, by indulging the luſts of the fleſh, 1 *Cor.* 6. 12. Be but a litel addicted to any one thing, & you are brought under the power of it: The fleſh waxes wanton & imperious, & ſlavery grows upon you by degrees: The more you cocker carnal affections, the more they encreaſe upon you; & therefore you muſt hold the reins hard, exerciſe a powerful reſtraint. *Solomon* in his *Penitentials* gives us an account of his own folly,

folly, and how fearfully he was corrupted this way, Eccl. 2.10. *What soever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them; I with-held not my heart from any joy, &c.* This was that which brought him to such a lawless excess, and at length to *fall off from God.* When we give Nature the full swing, and use pleasure with too free a license, the heart is insensibly corrupted, and the *necessities of life* are turned into *Diseases*; and all that you do, 'tis but in compliance with your lusts; your eating and drinking is but a meat-offering and drink-offering to lusts and carnal appetite. I remember *Solomon* saith (Prov. 29.21.) *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a Child, shall have him become his Son at length*: *i. e.* Allow a servant too much liberty, and he will no more know his condition, but grow contemptuous, bold and troublesome; so it is here: We are all the worse for license; natural desires unless they feel fetters and prudent restraints grow unruly and excessive; And therefore it is good to abate the liberty of the flesh, that the body may be a Servant and not a Master; when you deny your selves in nothing, but satisfie every vain Appetite, a custome grows upon the soul, and intemperance proves a Trade & an habituated distemper, so that you cannot when you would, upon prudent and pious respects, refrain and command your desires: And therefore 'tis good sometimes to thwart and vex the flesh, as *David* poured out the water of *Bethlem* that he longed for, 2 *Sam.* 23.17. not to deny our selves in what we affect and covet; lust grows into a wanton, and bold and imperious, and so prescribes upon us, *and we are brought under the power of these things.*

2. The

2. The buſineſſe and cares of this World: For, theſe immoderately followed, and not in obedience to God, are a ſore burden, and makes the ſoul heavy, and allows no time and ſtrength for God and his Service, and thoſe happy opportunities of private communion with him; When we are incumbred with *much ſervice*, we neglect that *one thing neceſſary*, Luke 10.42. and therefore Chriſtians muſt take heed that the lean Kine do not devour the fat; that *Sarah* be not thrown out of doors inſtead of *Hagar*; that *Religion* be not thruſt to the Walls, which ſhould be our *prime* and *chief buſineſs*, while every buſineſſe hath its time and courſe. The Scriptures knowing the proneneſs of our hearts to temporal things, deals with us as we do with a crooked ſtick, we bend it ſo much the other way, and therefore ſometimes they forbid *neceſſary labour*, John 6.28. *Labour not for the meat which periſheth*, &c. the meaning is, *not chiefly*; but it bends the ſtick another way, *Set not your affections on things on the Earth*: A man muſt have ſome kind of affection to his Work here below; but we had need to be bent the other way: We may gather this from this Precept, 'Tis better to incroach upon the World, than the World ſhould incroach upon godlineſs. In ſhort, Things are a burden and clog to us, according as our delight and ſcope is: If the pomp & encreaſe of the World be our end and ſcope, then Religion will be looked upon as a burden; that will be a weight, and all duties of godlineſs as a melancholy interruption, as they, (*Am.* 2.8. *When will the Sabbath be over?* The exerciſe of godlineſs will be a troubleſome thing, and we ſhall

go

go about the Work of Religion as if we went about it not: But, on the other ſide, if Heaven and Heavenly things be our ſcope, then the World is a burden, and then we ſhall uſe it in the way, but not abuſing, as taking up our reſt here, 1 *Cor.*7.31,32. Man hath a body and a ſoul, and he doth provide for both, but for one in *ſubordination*; the ſoul is the chief, and therefore we muſt not ſo look after the intereſts and concernments of the bodily life, as to forget the intereſts of the ſoul, or to neglect them. Many will not ſo groſly Idolize preſent things, ſo as to *renounce* things to come: I, but they ſo often follow the things of the world, that they neglect their eternal concernments. The happineſs of a people lies in communion with God; and therefore that muſt be looked after; we muſt take heed that the cares of the World have not ſuch a hand and power over us, as either to divert us from, or unfit us for theſe higher and nobler purſuits, the enjoyment of God in Chriſt. This is the firſt thing the Apoſtle ſpeaks to theſe ſpiritual Racers, to *lay aſide every weight*, i. e. the delights of the fleſh, and the cares of the World.

2*dly*, The next thing to be laid aſide, is ſin, which doth ſo eaſily beſet us. As we muſt guard againſt things without, ſo we muſt mortifie our corrupt inclinations within, or elſe it will ſoon make us weary of our heavenly Race, or faint in it. *Sin* you know is twofold, *Original* and *Actual*; Actual ſin is not meant primarily, for that is not *peccatum agens*, ſin that eaſily beſets us, but *peccatum tranſiens*, the ſin that paſſes from us; and

and *Original ſin* is that which is emphatically called *ſin*, Rom. 7,8. Now this original corruption may be conſidered as meerly *native*, or as *acquired* and improved into evil cuſtoms and habits; for according to mens tempers and conſtitutions, as they are ſeverally diſpoſed, ſo by the corruption of nature they are inclin'd to one ſin more than another; as the channel is cut, ſo corrupt nature findes a vent and iſſue; in every man there is ſome predominant ſin; and in every regenerate perſon ſome relicks of that ſin, from whence is the greateſt danger of his ſoul; thus *David* ſpeaks of his *iniquity*, *Pſal.* 18.23. Well then, this is *that ſin that doth eaſily beſet us*; Original ſin improved into ſome tyrannie or evil cuſtom, which doth encreaſe and prevail upon us more and more; Now, this is ſaid [*eaſily to beſet us*] for three reaſons. Partly becauſe it hath a great power and reſtraint over us, and implies the whole man; the members of the body, the faculties of the ſoul; ſo great an intereſt hath it acquired in our affections, it doth *eaſily beſet us*, it hath great power and command over us. Partly, becauſe it ſticks ſo cloſe that we cannot by our own ſtrength lay it aſide. *Jer.* 13,23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots, &c.?* A man can as ſoon change his skin, as lay aſide his cuſtoms, that are ſo deeply ingraven as the blackneſs of an Ethiopian, or the ſpots of the Leopard. And partly, becauſe it mingles it ſelf with all our motions and actions, *Rom.* 7.21. *&c.* It eaſily beſets us, 'tis preſent with us, it impels us, and ſolicits us, and draws us to ſin further

and

and further, and make us negligent in what is God's: we cannot do or speak any thing, but it will infest us in all our duties of piety, charity, justice; on every side it is interposing, vexing, thwarting the motions of the spirit, and so abates our strength, vigour, and agility, and retards our course towards heaven and glory; therefore, *lay aside* as every *weight*, so every *sin*, &c.

Qu. Now, what is it to [*lay aside?*] or how can we lay aside, since sin sticks so close to us, and is ingraven in our natures?

Aas. Certainly, something may be done by us; for this is every where pressed as our duty, *Eph.*4.4.22. *Put off the old man*, and 1*Pet.*2.11, we may *put it off* more and more, though we cannot *lay it aside*. Then we are said *to lay aside the sin that so easily besets us*, when we prevent and break the Dominion of it, that it shal not *raign over us*, Rom.6.12. *Let not sin reign*, &c. Though it dwells in us, lives in us, and works in us, yet it should not *overcome* us, and bring us into bondage, and so it will not be imputed to our condemnation; and at length when the soul shal be separated from the body, we shal be wholly free from it.

Qu. I, but what must we do that we may so repress it? (the question returns) that we may break the dominion of it?

Ans. I answer, this is the work of the spirit of God; but we must know, the spirit of God doth work the work of *mortification* two wayes: *By Regeneration*, and *after Regeneration*; By Regenation,

tion, and ſo he doth immediately without any co-operation of ours, mortifie the deeds of ſin, gives ſin its death-wound: That which is left, is as a thing *mortified*, 'tis broken; the Scripture often ſpeaks of this firſt Work of Regeneration, *Rom.*6.6. *Col.*2.11. Firſt, when we are planted into Chriſt, then we put off the body of ſin; and though it doth not preſently dye, yet its weakened, that it cannot *reign*, though it be not deſtroyed.

2. After Regeneration the Spirit doth more and more deſtroy ſin, the relicks of ſin, this crucified body of ſin, till it dieth wholly away; this he doth *in us*, but not *without us*, Rom 8.13. *Through the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the body*; Not the Spirit without us, nor we without the Spirit, but *ye through the Spirit*. What is then required of us?

1. Seriouſly purpoſe not to ſin, and promiſe to God to yeeld him unfeigned obedience. Eſpecially ſhould we make this promiſe in the uſe of thoſe ſolemn Rights by which the Covenant between God and us is confirmed. Take up a ſolemn purpoſe not to grieve the Spirit, nor to break his Law, *Pſal.*119.106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgements*: This purpoſe of heart is the root of all good actions; Therefore in the confidence of God's help, in the ſence of thy own weakneſſe. *Pſal.* 119.32. We cannot lay Wagers upon our own ſtrength, yet 'tis our duty to engage our hearts to God: To ſin againſt the light of our own Conſcience, and illumination of the Spirit and

the chastening and instruction of our own reins, that aggravates our sin; but to sin against, and besides our fixed purpose of not sinning, that lightens sin, for then 'tis a sin of weakness and infirmity, not of wilfulness and malice; and then we can say as *Paul*, Rom. 7. 19. when the heart is fixedly bent towards God, *The evil which I would not, that do I.* Two ways may we be said to sin against purpose, either when we are over-born besides our purpose, our purpose still remains to please God: As, when the water breaks over the bank, the bank remaining; in such a case the fault is not in the bank, but in the violence of the flood. Or 2*dly*, when we break off our purpose, or consent to do evil; as when we cut through the bank, the water may easily make through. There's a great deal of difference between sin dwelling in us, and sin entertained by us; between sin remaining, and sin reserved; and when you have a firm purpose against all sin, there is sin remaining; but 'tis not reserved, but 'tis not kept and allowed.

2. Watch over thy self with a holy self-suspition, because thou hast sin within thee that doth easily beset thee; therefore *consider thy wayes*, Psal. 119. 59. *Guard thy fences*, Job 31. 1. but above all, *keep thy heart*, Prov. 4. 23. Conscience must stand *Porter* at the door, and examine what comes in, and what goes out; watch over the stratagems of Satan, and seducing motions of thy own heart.

3. Resist and oppose strongly against the first risings of the flesh, and the tickling and pleasing motions

motions of sin that doth easily beset us, when it doth intice us away from God, or do any thing that is unseemly and contrary unto the duties of our heavenly calling. Oh! remember we are not debtors to the flesh, *Rom.* 8. 20. Thou art tyed to the Lord by all obligations & indulgence: therefore break the force of sin by a serious resistance; check it, and let thy soul rise up in indignation against it, my business is not to pleasure the flesh, but to please the Lord.

4. Bewail the involuntary lapses and falls with penitential tears, as *Peter went out and wept bitterly*, Mat. 26. 57. Godly sorrow is of great use for laying aside of sin, as salt potions kill worms: When children are troubled with worms, we give them salt potions; so these bitter penitential tears are the means God hath appointed to mortifie sin; that's the reason the Apostle saith, 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. *Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of*: 'Tis not onely a part of repentance, but worketh persevering durable resolutions, a walking closely with God; 'tis a means God hath blessed to this end and purpose.

5. Recover from thy falls, renew thy combate; as Israel, when they were overcome in battle, they would try it again and again, *Jud.* 20. 28. Take heed of ceasing for the present; for though thy enemy seems to prevail, though the flesh seems to prevail against the spirit in the battle; yet thou shalt have the best of it in the war; by the power of grace thou shalt have the victory.

Thus I have gone over the *privative* part of our duty, *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us*: I should have come to the *positive*, *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us*; there is the *duty*, *Let us run the Race that is set before us*; and there is the manner of the duty, Let us run *with patience*. I should have shovvn you, That a *Christian life is like a Race* from Earth to Heaven, in a vvay of holineſſe, and exerciſe of Grace. This Race it continues as long as we continue in the World, from our Nativity, to our death; after death the ſtriſe is ended. Now in this *race* we muſt *run*, and *ſo run that we may obtain the Crown*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. Running is a motion, and a ſpeedy motion; there is no lying, ſitting, or ſtanding, but ſtill there muſt be running: We muſt make a further *progreſs* in the vvay to Heaven, *forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before*, Phil. 3. 13. The Runner was not to enquire how much of the vvay already vvas paſt, but to ſtrain himſelf to overcome what vvas yet behind: And ſo ſhould vve conſider what ſins are yet to be mortified, what duties yet untouched, almoſt untouched; what hard Conflicts are yet to be undergone, and ſtill to hold on our way without twining aſide, or halting becauſe of difficulties, diſcouragements, ſtumbling-blocks. And there are *fellows* and *co-partners* vvith us that run this Race, vvith vvhom we may ſtrive in a holy emulation, vvho ſhould go forvvardeſt, who ſhould be moſt forward in the courſe of pleaſing God: Oh Chriſtians! there are many contentions amongſt us, but when ſhall we have

this

this holy contention? *Heb.*10. 24. In a Race there is the *Agonotheta*, the Judge of the ſports; ſo here God obſerves all; no matter vvhat the ſtanders by ſay, the Judge of the ſports muſt decide vvho muſt have the Crovvn, 1 *Cor.*14.3,4. And then, at the end of the race there is the Crown, 2 *Tim.*4.7,8 *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kepe the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteouſneſs, &c.* In a Race there are *ſpectators*, ſo there are here, God, Angels and Men, 1 Cor.4. 9. *We are a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels and to men, &c.*

Thus for the ſimilitude of our Race in our way to Heaven. Now wherein it differs.

This is a Race, not undertaken out of *wantonneſs*, but out of *neceſſity*: God hath called us to this courſe; and if we run not in this Race, we are undone for ever. And in other Races, but *one* had the Crown; here all are crowned, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. though they be not ſo eminent as the Apoſtle; here all are crown d that run in the manner God hath requir'd; *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day, and not to me onely, but to them that love his appearing.*

2. For the *manner* [*with patience*] *Let us run with patience.* Patience is neceſſary.

1. Partly becauſe of the length of the Race, and the diſtance between us and the promiſed Reward: Our Race cannot be ended but after ſome degrees of time; long waiting is troubleſome to the fleſh, and therefore we have need of patience.

2 Becauſe we meet with many impediments, troubles and temptations by the way; there are ſpiritual adverſaries with whom we moſt fight; for, we go on, we not onely run, but fight; therefore *run with patience, &c.*

3. Becauſe the *ſpectators* will be ready to diſcourage us; We are ſet forth not onely as a ſpectacle to God & Angels, but to the world, & they will be ready to deride, ſcorn and oppoſe us for our zeal to God, and our forwardneſs in the wayes of God, to diſcourage us by bitter mockings, *&c*, therefore *let us run with patience the Race that is ſet before us.*

FINIS.

THE Righteous man's Death LAMENTED.

A SERMON

Preached at

St. *Auſtins, London*,

Auguſt 23. 1662.

At the Funeral of that Eminent Servant of JESUS CHRIST,

Mr. *SIMEON ASH*,

Late Miniſter of the Goſpel there.

PSALM 112. Ver. 6.

The Righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance.

Printed in the Yeer 1662.

Esa. 57. Ver. 1. Mr Calamy.

The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering, that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.

WE are here met this Evening to perform the last Office of Love for an eminent and ancient servant of Jesus Christ, and excellent Minister of the Gospel, *Mr. Simeon Ash*, one who hath formerly performed this office for many other Ministers, and now we are met to perform this office for him; and it is not long before others will meet to perform the same office for us, so frail, so brittle, and so uncertain is the life of man.

Now

Now the Text that I have choſen, is ſuitable for this occaſion; for this Reverend Miniſter was firſt a righteous man; he was righteous in an Evangelical ſence, he was one that was juſtified and ſanctified. Secondly, He was a merciful man both in an active and paſſive ſence; he was one that ſhewed mercy to the diſtreſſed Members of Jeſus Chriſt, and he was one to whom God ſhewed mercy; this righteous and merciful man is now periſhed as to his outward condition, not as to his everlaſting condition; but as to his outward bodily condition he is periſhed, and he is taken away: The word in the *Hebrew* is very emphatical: *Merciful men, Colliguntur*, are gathered; it is the ſame Word that is uſed concerning *Joſiah*, 2 King. 22.10. *Thou ſhalt be gathered to thy Fathers, and go to thy grave in peace, and ſhalt not ſee the evil that I will bring upon this Nation.* This godly and righteous man is now gathered as ripe Corn in the Barn of Heaven; he is taken away from the evil that is to come, from the beholding that evil that is coming upon the ſinful World; he is taken away in mercy, that he may not be troubled with the troubles that are coming upon many; he is taken away from the evil to come.

And thus you ſee how ſuitable the Text is to the occaſion; there is onely one particular that I deſire may prove unſuitable; for the *righteous and merciful man* in the Text, *periſheth, and no man conſiders, nor lays it to heart*: Theſe words are *verba Commentantis & objurgantis*; the words of the Prophet bemoaning the ſpiritual ſecurity of the people of *Iſrael*, chiding and reproving them for their ſpirirual Lethargy:

thargy: Now I desire that this part may not prove suitable, but that all of you may lay to heart the death of this ancient, merciful, righteous man.

The observations from the words are these six.

First, *That the righteous man must perish as well as the unrighteous.*

Secondly, *That the perishing of a righteous man is nothing but his gathering to God, Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels.*

Thirdly, *That a righteous man as long as he liveth, is the preservative of a Nation, and the supporter of a Kingdom, the Chariots and horsmen of a Nation.*

Fourthly, *The death of a righteous man is a Warning-piece from Heaven, a Beacon set on fire to give notice of evil approaching.*

Fifthly, *That God doth on purpose take away righteous men, that they may not see the evil that is coming on a Nation.*

Sixthly, *That it is a great and common sin not to consider and lay to heart the death of a righteous man.*

First, It is a common sin, and therefore it is set down in the greatest latitude; *the righteous perisheth, and no man layes it to heart*; that is, very few: *And merciful men are taken away, no man considering*; that is, very few.

2*dly*, It is a great sin; and therefore the Prophet *Jeremy* in the former Chapter calls to all the Beasts of the Field to devour, that is, all the Enemies of the Church to destroy the Children of *Israel*, because they drank strong drink, filling themselves with merriment, and promised themselves happy days, but did not consider that *the righteous*

were

were taken away from the evil to come.

I ſhall begin with the firſt, *That the righteous periſh as well as the unrighteous.*

How is it that the righteous periſh? not in their ſoul, they cannot periſh ſo; nay, the truth is, they cannot periſh properly in their bodies; for the bodies of the Saints never totally and finally periſh; for the very duſt of the Saints in the grave, is precious in God's ſight, and they are aſleep in Jeſus; and by the povver of Jeſus Chriſt they ſhall be raiſed again glorious bodies: Nothing periſheth of a righteous man by death totally and finally, but ſin; and therefore the meaning of the Word is as *Muſculus* and *Juſtin Martyr* obſerve, *perit*, periſheth, that is, not according to the truth of the thing, but according to the opinion of the World; and the proper language of this expreſſion is this, *The righteous periſh*, that is, the righteous muſt dye and go down to the houſe of rottenneſſe as well as others, and that upon a four-fold account.

Firſt, Becauſe the righteous are included within the Statute of death as well as the unrighteous; *ſtatutum eſt*, Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed for all men once to dye*; the righteous as well as the unrighteous: Indeed it is true, Jeſus Chriſt hath taken avvay the hurt of death, but not death it ſelf; Jeſus Chriſt hath diſarmed death, made death like the Viper that faſtened upon *Paul's* hand, but did not hurt him; he hath made it like the brazen Serpent that hath no ſting, but a healing power in it; Chriſt hath ſanctified death, conquered and ſweetned Death; at preſent we are all under the ſtatute of Death, but at laſt this Enemy ſhall be deſtroyed, 2 *Cor.* 15. latter end.

2*dly*,

2*ly*. The righteous consist of perishing principle as wel as the unrighteous; the righteous are earthly vessels, made of dust; their foundation is in the dust; their lives are a vapor as wel as the lives of the unrighteous.

3. The righteous must die as wel as others, becaus they have a body of sin that they carry about with them; for there is no man so wise, that lives and sins not, *Eccl.*7.20. Wherefore there is that which deservs death in a righteous man.

Lastly, and especially, The righteous must perish upon a peculiar account; *For if we had hope only in this life* (saith the Apostle) *we are of all men most miserable*; and therefore they must perish to keep them from perishing; they must say as *Themistocles*, *Periissem nisi periissem*; they must die, that they may rest from their labour; for here is not our rest, *Mic.*2.10. there remaineth a rest for the people of God; there is no rest in this world; the word [*quies*] wants the plural number.

2*ly*. The righteous must die, that they may have their reward, their Crown of glory that God hath laid up for them; they must first fight the good fight, and finish their course, and then they shal receive a Crown of glory.

3*ly*. They must die, that they may be free from sin; for they shal never put off the body of sin, till they put off the body of flesh.

4*ly*. They must die, that mortality may be swallowed up of life, that corruption may put on incorruption.

5*ly*. They must die that they may be perfect in Grace.

Lastly,

Laſtly, They muſt dye, that they may ſee God face to face, and be for ever with the Lord, which they cannot do till they dye; therefore bleſſed be God that the righteous muſt periſh. If a man ſhould bring news to a righteous man, That he ſhould alwayes live on earth, always be young, rich and healthful, it would be unwelcome News; for while we are in the body, we are abſent from the Lord, and ſubject to ſin; and therefore when *Peter* asked Chriſt what ſhould be done with *John*, Chriſt tells him, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what's that to thee?* from henceforth there went a report abroad that *John* ſhould not dye, *John* 21. 32. Now the Apoſtle himſelf was much diſpleaſed with this report, and look't upon it as a great affliction that he ſhould not dye, and therefore he himſelf confutes it; *But yet Jeſus* (ſaid he) *ſaid not that he ſhould not dye*; as if he had ſaid, God forbid that I ſhould not dye.

Before I come to the Application of this point, give me leave to ſpeak ſomething to the ſecond point, and ſo I ſhall apply them both together.

The ſecond Doctrine is this, *That the periſhing of a righteous man, is nothing but a gathering of him to God, Chriſt, and the bleſſed Society of Saints and Angels in Heaven.*

This is contained in the ſecond expreſſion, *merciful men are taken away*; the word in the *Hebrew* is *Colliguntur*, they are gathered; it is exegetical of the former; they did not periſh, but they are gathered

thered to God and Christ; there is a great deal of excellency, and a Magazine of sweetnesse in this expression, *They are gathered*: It implies two things,

First, That the righteous are in a scattered condition while they are in this World, and that three wayes.

First, They are scattered among the wicked and ungodly of the World, as sheep among Wolves, as Lambs among Lions, rent and torn in pieces, forced to wander up and down in Sheep-Skins, and Goat-Skins.

2*dly*, The righteous are scattered in the World one from another, and that two wayes: 1. They are scattered by their different habitations; for the godly are forced to separate one from another, as *Lot* from *Abraham*. 2. They are scattered one from another by the cruel persecution of wicked men; and therefore you read *Acts* 8. that at that time when there was a persecution against the Church at *Jerusalem*, that they were all scattered abroad.

3*dly*, The godly are scattered in this life from the glorious presence of God in Heaven; indeed they are never scattered from the gracious presence of God, but sometimes they are scattered from the comforting presence of God; and as long as we live in this World, we shall be scattered from the glorious presence of God; for while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Secondly, This implies a bringing of God's people out of this scattered condition; it is a gathering of the righteous out of this World, into another,

another, from a ſinful perſecuted world, into a ſinleſs glorious world, from diverſity of dwellings on earth, to dwel altogether in one heaven; it is a gathering out of the reach of men and divels: a gathering them not only to the gracious, but to the glorious preſence of God and Chriſt, and to the ſouls of juſt men made perfect, and to the general aſſembly of the firſt born, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, where they ſhall live together, never to be ſcattered again. To underſtand this the better, let me offer three things to you, ſhewing you that the godly are gathered to God three ways: In this life, at death, and at the day of judgment.

Firſt, the righteous are gathered to God in this life, and that is at their firſt converſion; for by nature we are all aliens and ſtrangers to God, ſcattered from any union or communion with God; not only ſcattered from the glorious but from the gracious preſence of God. God made man at firſt to enjoy communion with himſelf; but *Adam* loſt this by his ſin, and now we are all *Cains* and Vagabonds, ſcattered from the love of God, and from union and communion with God; but when God converts any of the Elect, he gathers them home to himſelf; for converſion is nothing but God's gathering them to himſelf in the ſecond *Adam* that were ſcattered from him in the firſt *Adam*; the firſt *Adam* was a root of ſcattering, a root of ſeparation from God; but the ſecond *Adam* was a root of union and conjunction. Chriſt is the head, and

all

all the elect are all gathered together in him; 1 *Eph.* 10. that he might gather together in one all things in Christ; so that conversion is nothing but a gathering of the elect of God to Christ by faith, and a gathering to one another by love and charity.

Secondly, Gods people are gathered at death; here they are gathered to Christ by grace, but at death they are gathered to Christ in glory; here they are gathered to God by hope, but at death by fruition; here Christ is gathered to us, he comes down & dwells with us; but at death we shall be gathered to him, we shall go up, and be joyned with him. There's a great deal of difference between *esse cum Christo*, and *esse in Christo*; *esse cum Christo*, to be one with Christ is a Christians great security; but *esse in Christo*, to be one in Christ, it is a Christians great felicity: In this life we are gathered to God by faith, but at death by vision.

Lastly, we shall be gathered to God at the day of Judgment; it is called the day of the gathering of the Saints together; A day when all the Saints that are, have been, or shall be, shall all be gathered together. 2 *Thes.* 2. 1. I beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him at the great day; At the day of judgement we shall all be gathered together, and shall be all taken up to heaven; I mean all the righteous, and be ever with the Lord; and so much for the opening of the doctrine.

But here it may be objected, Are not the un-

 righteous

righteous gathered by death as well as the righteous?

I answer, It is true, the unrighteous are scattered in this life, and gathered by death as well as the righteous, but with a great deal of difference.

First, the wicked are scattered in this life, but they are scattered from God; but the godly are scattered for God, and for a good Conscience many times, as they at *Jerusalem* were scattered: The godly are scattered from the glorious presence of God in Heaven; but the wicked are scattered from the gracious presence of God on earth. Again, the scattering of the wicked is a curse to them, and it is threatned as a curse, *Levit.* 26 32. *I will scatter you among the heathen, and draw out my sword after you*: And wherever the wicked come, in what part soever of the World the wicked are scattered, they bring the curse of God with them; and they bring the Judgements of God on Towns or Cities where they are, as Plague, Famine and Sword, and all miseries. But the godly when they are scattered, they are scattered as a blessing; into what Countrey or Town soever they come, they come as a blessing, they come like a ship laden with Corn, to a Town ready to perish with Famine; they come as a blessing four ways.

First, By their prayers, to pray down a blessing on the place where they come.

Secondly, They come as a blessing by their holy life and conversation; that is a Loadstone to draw others to holiness.

Thirdly, They come as a blessing by their holy advice

advice and counsel that they give to the place where they come.

Nay fourthly, their very presence is a blessing; as long as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, *Sodom* could not be destroyed; so long as *Paul* was in the Ship, the three hundred could not be drown'd. So that the godly come as a blessing where-ever they are scattered, but the wicked are as chaff scattered by the Wind, and they are scattered as the dust of the earth. You know when the dust is scattered, it gets into mens eyes, and blinds them, and falls upon their cloaths and sullies and defiles them; so the wicked where-ever they are scattered, they defile the place where they are scattered. The godly are as Planets, that wander and move from one part of Heaven to another, carrying light to the World.

Secondly, As the wicked are scattered while they live, so when they dye, they are gathered; it is true: But how? not to God and Christ, and his Angels; but they are gathered to the Devil and his Angels, and to damned spirits; not as bundles of Wheat into the Barn of Heaven, but as bundles of Tares to be burned for ever in everlasting fire.

Now, if the righteous perish as well as others, and if their perishing be nothing but a gathering to God and Christ: Then

First, learn hence the preciousness of every righteous man; the great God will not gather things of no value; great men do not use to gather chaff and straw; and therefore when God saith of *Josiah I will gather thee to thy Fathers*, it was a sign he

was a precious pearl worth the gathering, and of a high value and account in the ſight of God; and ſo is every true child of God; right dear and precious are they in the ſight of God, both living and dying; they are bought with a great price; not with gold and ſilver, and other corruptible things; but they are bought with the precious blood of the Son of God: They are as precious to God as the apple of his eye; ſo precious that he hath given Chriſt for them and to them; ſo precious that he called them his Jewels, his peculiar treaſure, his *Jedidiahs*, and therefore God will not ſuffer them to periſh, but gather them to himſelf before the evil day come, as the husbandman gathers in the corn before the beaſts go out into the field.

Secondly, Learn here what reaſon we have to be comforted in the death of a righteous man or woman, becauſe their death is not a periſhing, but a gathering to God and Chriſt, and the ſociety of Saints and Angels. The death of a righteous man is no more then if a Merchant that hath abundance of Jewels in a far country, he ſhould ſend for them home. Why death to a righteous man is nothing but Gods ſending for his Jewels home. Such a phraſe there is in *Mal.* 3, 17. In the day that I make up my Jewels they ſhall be mine. In this life they are imperfect Jewels; they are like gold in the oar mingled with a great deal of droſſe; and death is nothing but a perfecting of theſe Jewels; death is nothing more; and God doth nothing by death, but as a gold-finder gather up all

all his ends of gold and silver: It is nothing but just as if a Father should send for his Son home that had been a long while absent from him to his own house; it is a carrying us to our Father's house: And therefore let us be comforted when our righteous friends die; though their death be matter of sorrow to us, in regard of the loss that we sustain by their death; and because their death is a warning-piece of evil to come; yet in regard of them we have no cause to mourn. I speak this to those that are related to the righteous when they die; Did you ever see a Husbandman that mourned for the carrying of his corn into the Barn? or a Jeweller mourn for making up of his Jewels? Let us mourn rather that we are left scattered among the wicked of the Earth, & from the glorious presence of God and Christ; and let us mourn for those that are scattered from Christ, and from grace; and for those that whilest they live, are scattered, and when they die, are gathered to the Divel and his Angels: Let us not mourn for those that die in Christ, but let us mourn for those that live out of Christ; let us not mourn over the body that the soul hath left, but let us mourn over the soul that God hath left.

The third Use is of Consolation to all the people of God in reference to evil times that are coming upon us, or to the evil of times. Whatever befalls a Child of God in this life, though he be scattered by wicked men, from *England* into Foreign Countreys, though he wander up and down in Desarts and Wildernesses, though he be scattered from house to prison, yet there will be a gather-

ing time ſhortly; there will a time come when all the Saints ſhall be gathered to Chriſt, and to one another, never to part any more. The death of God's people is not a periſhing, but a gathering; comfort your ſelves therefore with theſe words, againſt the fear of death; look upon death as a gathering, as a gathering to Chriſt: You are here as *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, as *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon; yet there will come a gathering; and if you dye in a good Cauſe, you ſhall not periſh, but be gathered to Chriſt, to his Saints and Angels.

But you will ſay, *If I were ſure when I dye, that I ſhould be gathered to Chriſt, to live for ever with him, this would be matter of great conſolation to me; but you told me, the wicked are gathered by death as well as the godly; how ſhall I know whether (when I come to dye) I ſhall be gathered to the Devil and his Angels, or to Chriſt and his Angels? How ſhall I know whether I ſhall be gathered at death as a bundle of tares to be burned in Hell, or as a bundle of Wheat to be carried up into the Barn of Heaven?*

I anſwer, you may know it by four things.

Firſt, If you are righteous, then you ſhall be gathered to Chriſt at death; *for the righteous ſhall go into everlaſting life*: Heaven is entailed upon righteous men; by righteouſneſs I mean the imputed righteouſneſs, and the imparted righteouſneſſe of Jeſus Chriſt: I wave the explication of them, becauſe time will not give leave. *Know you not* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that no unrighteous man ſhall inherit the*

King-

Kingdom of God? Damnation is entailed upon unrighteous men:

Secondly, If you are merciful; the merciful man shall be gathered to Christ: If you are one that is full of bowels of compasion to the distressed Members of Jesus Christ, for Christ hath said it, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* Now if you are hard-hearted, covetous, worldly-minded, remember that Text, *He shall have judgement without mercy, that shews no mercy.*

Thirdly, He that is gathered to the second *Adam* by faith in this World, shal certainly be gathered unto Christ by vision in the other World; Christ Jesus will save all his Members; and you must know, that Faith is a transplanting Grace; it is not only a heart-purifying, but a World-overcoming Grace, it takes a man out of the old *Adam*, and puts him into the new *Adam*; it takes a man out of the root of scattering, and puts him into the root of union & conjunction: Wherefore you that are now joined to Christ by faith here, shall be joined to Christ in glory hereafter: But now you that are Vagabonds, *Cains* and Aliens from the life of God, and from the life of Grace: You that are wooden members, wooden legs in Christ's body, that have no real conjunction with Christ, you shall not be gathered to him in glory.

Lastly, If you are gathered here to the Saints by love, then you shall be gathered to the Saints in Heaven, and to the everlasting enjoyment of God with them to all Eternity. Consider this; Every man shall be gathered (when he dies) to those whom he delights, and chooseth to keep company

with while he lives in the world: if you are gathered to the wicked in love and affection here, you shal be gathered to them at death in Hell and destruction; for it's pity companions should be parted: Wheat must to Wheat, and Tares to Tares; for Wheat and Tares shal not be bound together at the last day.

The last Use is of Exhortation: If the righteous must perish, and if their death be nothing but a gathering, then take this threefold Exhortation.

First, Let us labour to make the best use we can of our godly friends and Ministers before they are gathered; let us do as *Elisha* did; he was told that his Master *Elijah* was to be taken up to Heaven, and therefore he would never leav him till he had got the spirit of *Elijah* doubled upon him: If *Elisha* had not thought that *Elijah* would have been taken up that day, he would never have followed him so punctually and inseparably as he did. O beloved, did you believe that text, *Zach.* 1 5. of which wee have often had experience, *Your Fathers where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* Indeed if they did live for ever, we might get good from them when we please, because we are sure never to lose them; but they live not for ever, but must perish, and be taken up to Heaven: And therefore whilst we have them, let us make what use we can of them, before they be taken away from us. It is a great fault among the people of God, that they make no more use of their godly Friends and Ministers. I have known many that have godly Relations that have died, that it hath been

been the greateſt burthen on their Conſciences, that they got no more good by thoſe godly Relations while they lived. Many of us deal with our Miniſters as we do with a ſtrange ſight that is to be ſeen near our doors; we are not much ſolicitous when we ſee it; but a ſtranger that comes from a far Country, is curious, and very careful preſently to ſee it. So do we in this City eſpecially; I have had experience of it by being here many years ſtrangers that come out of the Country, many times get that good by a Miniſter, that his own people do not, becauſe they think their Miniſter is continually with them: But a ſtranger knows he is there but for a day, and he hears ſo, that he carries Chriſt home with him, & a great deal of conſolation alſo. Beloved, this is a great fault; I beſeech you remember, the righteous muſt be gathered; let us therefore do with them as we do with Books that are borrowed; if a man borrows a Book, he knows he muſt keep it but for a day or two, and therefore he wil be ſure to read it over; whereas if the Book be a man's own, he layes it aſide, becauſ he knows he can read it at any time. Remember, your Miniſters are but lent you, they are not your own, and you know not but God may take your *Elijahs* from you this night: Therefore make what uſe you can of them, while you have them.

2*dly*, Muſt the righteous be taken away? Then let the righteous make conſcience of doing what good they can before they are taken away. Beloved, if it were poſſible for the godly to grieve in

Heaven,

Heaven, this would be their greateſt ſorrow, that they have done God no more ſervice here upon Earth. Be wiſe for God, O ye righteous; do as old men do that have rich places and offices; they labour to buy the reverſion of their places for their Children; ſo muſt you to whom God hath given great gifts and graces, labour to propagate your gifts and graces, that there may be no loſs by your death. Obſerve the care of St. *Paul* the aged in his exhortations to *Timothy*; 2 Tim. 4. 5, 6. *Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangeliſt, make full proof of thy Miniſtry*; why ſo? *for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*; and therefore work thou, ſee that thou endure affliction, preach the Goſpel as becomes a Miniſter of the Goſpel, that there may be no loſs by my departure; ſo in 2 *Tim.* 2. 2. *The things that thou haſt heard of me among many Witneſſes, the ſame commit thou to faithful men, that ſhall be able to teach others alſo.* Hath God committed any thing to you? a treaſure of Learning or Grace; commit it to young Miniſters, that they may commit it to others, that ſo there may be a ſucceſſion of gifts and graces. Do as Phyſicians do, that labour to communicate their skill to their children and to others; ſo ſhould we, that ſo there may be a ſucceſsion of godly ones, that godlineſs may be entailed upon us and our Relations.

Thirdly and laſtly, Let us all labour to be ſuch, that when we dye, when we come to be gathered, we may be gathered to Chriſt and his Angels, and not to the Devil and his Angels. And for that purpoſe, let us labour to be merciful and righte-

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ous, and let us be gathered to Christ by faith, and to one another by love and dear affection, and then we shall be gathered at the great day to Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels.

There are four observations yet behind, but I must wave them at this time.

I have now another Sermon to preach, and I cannot without injury to you that are alive, and without wrong to the memory of my dearly beloved Brother, but speak something of him at whose Funeral vve are met this evening, not so much for his commendation, he needs it not, but for our imitation; it is pitty, great pitty something should not be said, that this Reverend Minister, though dead, may yet preach this night; and I have so much to say of him, that I know not where to begin; and when I I have begun, I hardly know how to make an end: *I* must confess, the little time allotted me for the providing for this solemn Work, and the necessary avocations in this little time, have hindered me from informing my self about his breeding and manner of education at *Emanuel Colledge* under Mr. *Hooker*, and his excellent carriage and converse with Mr. *Hildersam*, *Mr. Dod*, Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Langley*, and other Ministers famous in their generations; and the many pressures and hardships that he suffered in those parts and times, for the keeping of his Conscience pure from that which he counted sinne; and therefore I must draw a vail over that part of his life, and confine my discourse onely to the time since his coming to live with us in *London*, about is about the space of twenty two, or three

three and twenty years; all which time, I have had the happineſs to be intimately acquainted with him, inſomuch as that I can freely and clearly profeſs, and that with a ſad heart, that I, and many others, have loſt a real, wiſe, and godly friend, brother, and fellow-labourer in the Lord; the Church hath loſt an eminent member, and choice pillar: and this City hath loſt an ancient, faithful, and painful miniſter; who by his prayers and holy life, did ſeek to keep off the Judgments of God from falling upon us; and the leſs ſenſible the City is of this loſs, the greater is the loſs. I fear we may too truly repeat the words in the Text, *The righteous periſheth, and no man layes it to heart; and mercifull men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* I have read of *Philo* the *Jew*, and by chance met with the ſame in the life of S. *Ambroſe*, that when they came to any City or Town, and heard of the death of any godly man, though never ſo poor, they would both of them mourn exceedingly, becauſe of the great loſs that place had by the death of that godly man, and becauſe it was a warning-piece from God of evil approaching. But we have had many godly men, and godly miniſters, taken away of late, and yet I fear me, but few lay it to heart; and therefore as I ſaid, the loſs is the greater to this City, becauſe it is ſo little ſenſible of it. It is a great loſs alſo to his relations; his wife hath loſt a dear and loving husband, his ſiſter a dear brother, his pariſh and congregation a faithful paſtour.

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The miniſterial excellencies of many miniſters were collected and concentred in one *Simeon Aſh*; he was a *Bezaleel* in Gods tabernacle, a maſter builder, an old diſciple, a Polycarpe, a Chriſtian of long ſtanding in the ſchool of Chriſt, a burning and a ſhining light, one whom many miniſters and other good Chriſtians called father, inſomuch that it was a common proverb in this City, father *Aſh*; and I believe, many experimentally lament over him, as the King did over the Prophet *Eliſha*; *My father, my father, the chariots of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof*! For he lived deſired, and died lamented; not only in the City, but I believe in very many places in the Country where he was known. But more particularly, there were twelve excellencies that I obſerved in this Reverend Miniſter, and my dear brother, that were as twelve jewels or precious pearls in that crown with which God had crowned him: I ſhall name them for your imitation and benefit; he needs them not, for he is above our Eulogy.

The firſt and chief Jewel that did beautifie and adorn this our brother, was his ſincerity and uprightneſs of heart; which indeed is not a ſingle grace, but the ſoul of all grace, and the interlineary that muſt run through all grace; for what is faith if it be not unfained? what will love to God profit you if it be not without diſſimulation? what is repentance worth if it be not in truth? as the body without the ſoul is a rotten carkaſſe, ſo is all grace without ſincerity; this is the ſoul of all grace, this is the girdle of truth,

truth. Sincerity is that which girts all our ſpiritual armour together, and makes them uſeful; what advantage is it to have the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs, the ſhield of faith, the helmet of hope, if they be but painted things? it is the girdle of ſincerity that makes all the other parts of our armour uſeful. Now this excellent grace of ſincerity was eminent in this our dear brother; he was a true *Nathanael*, in whom there was no guile; I mean, no allowed hypocriſie; and this was that which carried him through the pangs of death with a great deal of comfort; for hee was able to ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* He could ſay with *Paul*, *This is my rejoicing, the teſtimony of my conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, I have had my converſation in the world.*

Secondly, another Jewel was his humility; this is a grace that he was cloathed withall, and it is a rare grace; for God dwells with the humble; he reſiſts the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. This reverend miniſter was low in his own eyes, and therefore very high in God's eyes; hee had a mean eſteem of himſelf, and therefore he was in high eſteem with God. Hee was as *Jacob* ſaid of himſelf, leſs then the leaſt of God's mercies, and therefore he was made partaker of the beſt of God's mercies. He was like an ear of corn full of fruit, bowing down in thankfulneſs to God.

Thirdly, another Jewel was the fruitfulneſs of his diſcourſe; for it may be ſaid of him, as it

was

was of Christ, he went about doing good; where-ever he went, he scattered his goodness; this all that knew him, know to be true. He was full of good discourse where-ever he came. When I was with him in his sickness, he took occasion to complain much, and not without just cause (God grant his complaint may make impression upon our hearts) he complained that it was a great fault among Ministers, that when they met together, they discoursed no more of Christ, of Heaven, and of the concernments of the other World; and professed, that if God should restore him, he would be more careful in his discourse, and more fruitful than ever yet he had been.

Fourthly, Another Jewel that beautified this righteous man, was his mercifulness: He was a merciful man, which he manifested not onely in his charity to the members of Jesus Christ, but in his frequent visiting of sick persons, and persons that needed his spiritual Physick. I know not any Minister in the City more careful in visiting the sick, than he was.

Fifthly, Another Jewel was his prudence and spiritual Wisdom; he was not onely a pious and godly, but a wise and prudent Minister, that had zeal for God, but knew how to mingle his zeal with discretion; discretion indeed without zeal, is nothing but carnal policy; but zeal without discretion, is nothing but frantick fury; discretion without zeal wil quickly eat out the heart of Religion, and eat Religion out of the heart. Zeal without discretion is not a Coal

from

from the Altar, but a coal kindled by the Wild-fire of paſſion, that is able to ſet a Nation on fire; but this Reverend Miniſter had zeal ſweetly tempered with diſcretion.

Sixthly, Another Jewel was his patience; God was pleaſed to exerciſe him with long & great afflictions by reaſon of the Gout, that did often, eſpecially of late years affix him to his bed, & afflict him with great pain; but God was pleaſed to put his everlaſting Arms underneath him, ſupporting him under all his pains, & giving him a great meaſure of patience, inſomuch that in patience he did poſſeſs his ſoul, and patience had its perfect Work in him.

The ſeventh Jewel was his high valuation of Jeſus Chriſt; a written copy for us to follow; & for you his people alſo. Being with him in his laſt ſickneſs, he exhorted me & other Miniſters with him to preach much of Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſpeak to him of Jeſus Chriſt; and he ſaid, *When I conſider my beſt duties, I ſink, I dye, I deſpair; but when I think of Chriſt I have enough, he is all, and in all.* I think theſe were his very words, *I deſire* (ſaid he) *to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified: I account all things dung and droſs, that I may be found in Chriſt*: To this effect he ſpake in the morning before the evening in which he dyed, ſpeaking much of Jeſus Chriſt.

Eightly, Another Jewel was his diligence in preaching the Goſpel in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; in the time of his health he was a painful, laborious Preacher; one that did not preach to tickle the ear, to wound the heart; not to pleaſe, but to profit;

profit; not seeking the applause of the people, but the salvation of their souls: This all know to be true.

Ninthly, Another Jewel that did beautifie and adorn this Reverend Minister, was his excellent gift in Prayer; and herein he was very eminent, and did exceed many, nay I may say most of his Brethren: As *Apollos* was mighty in the Scriptures, so was he (as you all know) mighty in prayer; he was a *Jacob*, very skilful in wrestling with God, like *Moses* he often stood in the gap, and at most Fasts in the time of his health, he was the Minister that was chosen to conclude with prayer; and this heightens the loss that we sustain by the death of this godly Minister, because we have lost the benefit of his prayers, which is an invaluable loss; for though I doubt not but he prays in Heaven for the Church in general, yet I believe he prays not for any in particular, as not knowing what our condition is, *For Abraham knows us not*, for the Saints in heaven know not what is done upon earth. The loss therefore is the greater, because we have lost not only a preaching, but a praying-Minister: And give me leave to add, that this excellency in this Minister, is sufficient to prove, 1. That there is a gift of prayer, which some against all reason do deny. 2. That conceived prayers when uttered by one that hath the gift of prayer, are not vain *Tautologies*, or empty repetitions, and a rate of non-sense; as some unjustly charge men with; but they are the breathings of Gods Spirit, that pierce not only into the ears and hearts of the hearers, but into the ears and heart of God himself.

Tenthly, The next Jewel was, He had great acquaintance and communion with God; for he was of a long ſtanding in the School of Chriſt, and a good Proficient in that School. Much acquaintance he had with God, he was often in the Mount with God, and came down with his face ſhining, though he in his modeſty did not ſee it; and when he came to dye he was able to ſay as Dr. *Preſton* did when he lay a dying, *I ſhall change my place, but not my company.*

Eleventhly, Another Jewel was, his comfortable paſſage out of this World, dying with a great deal of calmneſs and ſerenity upon his Conſcience; The morning before he dyed, I heard him ſay theſe words, *It is one thing to ſpeak of Chriſt, and of Heaven, and another thing to feel the conſolations of Chriſt and of Heaven, as I do*, clapping his hand on his breaſt. Another time I heard him ſay, *The comforts of a holy life are real, ſoul-ſupporting; and that he felt the reality of thoſe comforts, and that by him we might know it was not in vain to ſerve God.* And I cannot forget this ſpeech the morning before he died, *I am a little ſtraitned, but I care no more for my life, then I do for this fillip*: That which was ſaid of old *Simeon* Luk. 2. may be ſaid of this Reverend Miniſter, Mr. *Simeon Aſh*, who was a *Simeon*, a juſt and devout man, an old Servant of *Jeſus Chriſt*, one that waited for the conſolation of *Iſrael*, one that dyed, though not with Chriſt in his bodily Arms, yet with Chriſt in the Arms of his Faith; and when he died, could ſay as it is there, *Now Lord, letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

Laſtly,

Lastly, Another Jewel was his constancy and perseverance; he was not a Reed shaken with every wind, but as firm as a Rock, an immovable Pillar in God's House; he was unchangeable in changeable times; in Religion he was a house built on a Rock, not on the Sand; and as he lived, so he dyed holily, even as the ancient Patriarks that dyed in the Faith, and endured faithfully unto the death.

Now this excellent Minister of Christ thus beautified with these Jewels, is now perished as to his outward man, gathered to God, to Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels. The application that I shall make of this Discourse, is this,

1. To us Ministers.

2. To you of this Parish and Congregation.

First to us Ministers. God hath of late years taken to himself many famous men: Seven of the Lecturers of *Cornhill* are dead. Mr. *Burroughs*, Dr. *Bolton*, Mr. *Sedgewick*, Mr. *Whitaker*, Mr. *Cranford*, Mr. *Vines*, and now Mr. *Ash*. I might name many other excellent Ministers that are dead, as Dr. *Gouge*, Mr. *Walker*, Mr. *Gataker*, Mr. *Marshal*, Mr. *Robinson*, and lately Mr. *Cook*, with many more: Now all these are Warning-pieces from Heaven of Judgements approaching; *For the righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* Thus *Methuselah* dyed a year before the Flood: Now *Methuselah* in *Hebrew* signifies a Messenger of death. Thus *Austin* dyed a little before *Hippo* was taken; and *Pareus* a little before *Hiddleburge* was taken, and *Luther* a little before the Wars in *Germany* began. The death of

the godly is like the separating of the Israelites from the tents of *Corah* and his company, like the taking of *Lot* out of *Sodome*. When the Israelites departed from *Corah* and his company, the earth swallowed them up; and when *Lot* departed out of *Sodome*, God rained down fire and brimstone upon them. Let the thoughts of these things cause us to provide our Arkes, to get our *Zoar's*. Let it teach young *Samuels*, to rise up in the room of old *Ely's*; young *Elisha's*, in the room of old *Elijahs*, and young *Timothies*, in the room of *Paul* the aged; that there may be a succession of Gospel Ministers to hold forth the word of life to this Nation. And let us labour to be inheritours of these twelve excellencies, that beautified this our reverend brother.

Secondly, let me speak a few words to you of this Parish, the auditors of this worthy Minister. There is scarce one man of a hundred, that understands the tye and obligation that is betwixt a minister and his people. O the love and affection that ought to be betwixt them! *Paul* tells the *Galatians*, that they could a pluckt out their eyes for him if need were. *Chrysostome* tells us, that when *Miletius* was taken away by death from his people, their hearts sunk with sorrow; and such love had they to him, that they called all their children by his name, and got his picture engraven on their rings. And I have read of *Chrysostome*, that when he was banished from his people, there was not a corner in the City, but was full of people weeping and lamenting. The loss of a godly minister, is a publick loss, and

therefore

therefore there ought to be publick mourning; it is a ſoul loſs, and therefore, methinks, every one of you ſhould weep and mourn; you have loſt your common father; you of this congregation have loſt your ſpiritual father, your ſpiritual ſhepheard; you have loſt your eyes, your guide; and indeed it is you that are his flock that muſt commend your miniſter by practiſing that which he preached; ſaid the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 1. *Do we again begin to commend our ſelves, or need we as ſome others, Epiſtles of commendations to you; or letters of commendations from you? Ye are our Epiſtle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.* As if the Apoſtle ſhould ſay, do we need letters of commendation? is it neceſſary that we ſhould ſpend time in commending our miniſtry; you are our letters of commendation; your holineſs and piety commends a miniſter above all other things. As when a man comes into an Orchard or Vineyard, ſaid *Chryſoſtome*, and ſees every thing skilfully handled, and neatly trimmed, he need not ſpend time in commending the Vine-dreſſer or Carpenter; the work it ſelf commends them. So ought it to be among you; when we preach the Funeral Sermons of Miniſters, we muſt look into his Pariſh or Congregation, and ſee what letters of commendation there are; whether the proficiency of the Auditors commend their Miniſters. I grant, it is not always true; God doth not always give ſucceſs to a godly Miniſter, but the worſt is yours; I had almoſt ſaid the curſe is yours; but I will ſpeak modeſtly, the worſt is yours. Tell me how many

of

of you are able to say, I blesse God that ever such a Minister was sent among us; blessed be God that ever we heard him preach; what seal of his ministry is there here among you? he was in another, and another place in this City; it may be here are people from all places that have been his auditors; what seal of his ministry is there now to be found among you? how many souls hath he pluckt out of the snares of the divel? how many of you have gone away weeping from a Sermon, knocking your breasts, and pricked at the hearts for sin, crying out Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved? your tears and mourning for sin, these are the auditors that commend your ministers. Go home now, and think with your selves, What can I remember of all the Sermons that I have heard from Mr. *Ash!* and give me leave to tell you, woe be to you, if as your Minister be dead, so all the Sermons that he made dye with him: For as *Abel* being dead, yet speaketh; so shall the Sermons of this worthy Minister at the great day, speak for you, or against you; for they are spiritual talents that God hath betrusted you with, and you must be accountable; both he and you shall appear before the Tribunal of God; your Minister shall be examined, how he can free himself from the guilt of soul blood; and you shall be examined, what fruit you have brought forth, answerable to the means that you have enjoyed; and if it appear that you have been unprofitable and unfruitful hearers, Christ will say, *Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness.* But I hope

better

better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation. Whatever was good in this reverend Miniſter, let it live in you; and though he be dead, yet let not his ſermons that he preached dye with you, but let them be in you; that at the great day, when he and you appear before God, he may be able to ſay, Here am I, and the Children that thou haſt given me.

FINIS.